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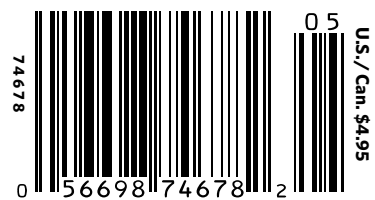
Faith in Action for Social Justice

Who Is My Neighbor?

A day in the life of a refugee family.

PLUS:

What our bodies teach us about God
Morality and climate change
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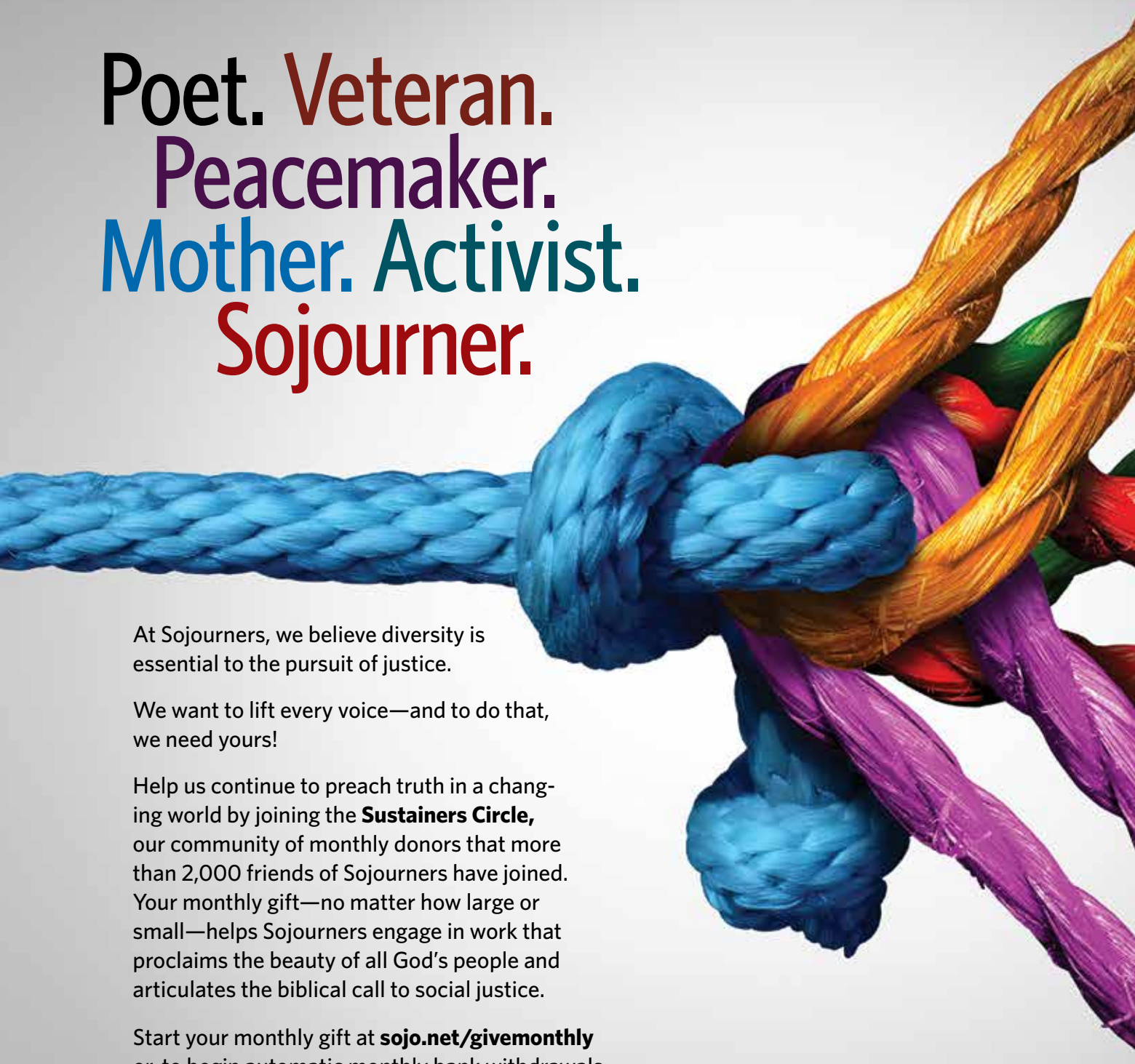
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BODIES ARE COMPLICATED; we knew that. But in our editorial meetings about this month's cover story, we developed a new appreciation for the way in which talking about skin and bones inevitably leads to theology and politics.

We'll explain: One strong contender for this month's cover was "This is My Body," a collection of responses to the question, "What does your body tell you about God?" But the challenge: How do we distill such varied responses into a single magazine cover? Artsy, abstract approaches didn't seem right—after all, the authors wrote about physical embodiment. We needed a real image of a real body ... but whose? Should the body be brown, black, white, or

something else? Differently abled? Fat? Gender-conforming? Elderly? We looked at images with a variety of bodies, but the more we tried to be inclusive, the more obvious the impossibility of our task became. As J. Nicole Morgan writes in this issue, "God's image is not too small to be found in every body, no matter its size, color, gender, or ability." Magazine covers, we grudgingly admitted, were more limited.

At the same time, we were working with Minneapolis-based photographer Katie Koranda, who introduced us to Saciido Shaie, a Somali Muslim refugee who arrived in the U.S. in 1992. Shaie's story is also about bodies—those of people who were forced



to flee the country where they were born, who often wear hijabs over their brown or black skin, and who are, statistically speaking, more likely to be victims of violent crimes.

We decided to put Shaie on our cover because our nation seems to be having particular trouble seeing the image of God in bodies like hers these days. And while we recognize that this is true of many kinds of bodies, we hope Shaie's story reminds us all that the "issues" in news headlines—about "undocumented immigrants," "black trans women," and so many more—are real, flesh-and-blood people made in God's own likeness. ■

Letters

Veterans' Affairs

Wonderful to see Standing Rock featured on the front cover and within the February 2017 issue ("A Chorus of Resistance," by Gregg Brekke). One other moment people might have missed: Some among the thousands of veterans supporting the water protectors went down on their knees to apologize for the atrocities committed by Army units against the Sioux people over the centuries of white hegemony. The elders forgave them. I, for one, wept at the grace of this.

Katharine Preston
Essex, New York

Where Two or More Are Gathered ...

There are some things in the article "Where Protestantism Went Wrong" (by Wesley Granberg-Michaelson, February 2017) that leave me unsettled. The article seems to indicate that a single person (a bishop or whomever) is a better arbiter of the truth than a council or a group (presbytery, synod, etc.). By declaring the priesthood of all believers, the Reformation raised up the importance of all people—educated, ordinary, or otherwise. My experience has been that, on the whole, a council or group is more likely to arrive at a truthful, correct, or workable solution to whatever issue is before them than any one individual in the group.

Mike Smathers
Crossville, Tennessee

The Reformation raised up the importance of all people—educated, ordinary, or otherwise.

'Duck' And Cover?

I finished my reading of Rose Marie Berger's "Mosquito Manifesto" (February 2017) with a positive feeling. Almost immediately, however, another image flashed through my mind: a short cartoon in which Donald Duck goes on vacation. Sitting in his lounge chair on the lawn, relaxing at last, Donald is set upon by a lone mosquito. Those who know the temperament of Donald Duck can guess the outcome. The final scene shows the mosquito escaping into the sky as Donald destroys his mountain cabin with shotgun blasts in a last vain attempt to rid the world of this pesky mosquito.

Is there not a real danger that instead of bringing down the giant, Lilliputian style, we mosquitos might actually provoke annihilation, not just of ourselves but of many unintended victims of the wrath of the powerful who will not care who they hurt in their attempts to rid the world of us?

David Tidball
Roseville, Minnesota

Not Alter Egos

In the February 2017 issue of *Sojourners*, Will Willimon makes an excellent case for

the need to address racism from the pulpit ("Preaching the Devil Out"). However, as a Christian mental health professional, I disagree with his contrast between preaching and psychotherapy. I agree the two are separate, but one is not inferior to the other. Willimon characterizes psychotherapy as a luxury only privileged people use. This is based on historical fact, dating back to Freud, when psychoanalysis was provided only to the very richest. Today, however, mental health is constantly striving to be available to the poor and culturally diverse. I can think of no other institution, including the American church, that is more dedicated in practice to understanding and spreading unity among diverse people groups. I suggest that therapists and pastors pursue this goal together, using our unique talents in tandem, instead of trying to become an alternative to the other.

Nick Schollars
via email

"On the other hand..." Write to letters@sojo.net or Letters, *Sojourners*, 408 C Street NE, Washington, DC 20002. Include your name, city, and state. Letters may be edited.

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BY JIM WALLIS

In Such a Time as This



MANY PEOPLE IN our nation, and indeed around the world, are frightened by the things happening in Washington, D.C. Those most affected by the actions of this administration are especially afraid—and so far the fears of those who were directly targeted by President Trump during the campaign have proven all too justified.

Immigrant families are faced with an administration crackdown on undocumented people. Children are afraid to go to school, families avoid medical facilities, and some people have even expressed their fear of going to church, where they might be targeted by Immigration and Customs Enforcement agents—whose numbers Trump and Homeland Security Secretary John Kelly have promised to increase by

the young people in their communities and their interactions with police. Racial policing is obviously not a new problem in America, and Trump didn't start it, but the racial rhetoric of his campaign and the appointments he has made have struck fear into the hearts of many. The president promotes "law and order" and "stop and frisk" in familiar coded language that racial minorities understand. If there is no accountability from the administration or the Justice Department for those who would use excessive force against citizens of color—and especially young people—churches and clergy are pledging to hold their police departments accountable.

Muslims are also feeling afraid in light of travel bans they feel are directed at them (understandable, given Trump's past statements). Their fears also stem from increasing incidents of hate speech and threats against them, and of new White House officials with records of Islamophobia. Many American Muslims fear that the government will use terrorism as a pretext to attack their civil society organizations in the U.S., ascribing sinister motives to nonprofit organizations that do good and important work. But when Muslims are threatened by religious discrimination and persecution, many other people of faith are pledging to stand with them. People of faith will also stand alongside Jews, who have faced a surge of anti-Semitic language, vandalism, and threats in recent months.

BECAUSE OF such widespread threats, thousands of people of faith have decided to act. We have created the Matthew 25 Pledge—one simple sentence that says: "I pledge to protect and defend vulnerable people in the name of Jesus."

Matthew 25 is the gospel text where Jesus says: As you have done

to the least of these, you have done to me. Jesus says that how we treat the most vulnerable members of society—the hungry, the thirsty, the stranger, the naked, the sick, the prisoner—is how we treat him.

The Matthew 25 movement is a broad coalition of national faith-based groups, local churches, clergy associations, grassroots activists, heads of denominations, seminaries, Christian colleges, and more. We are focusing on three groups of people who are especially at risk right now under the Trump administration: undocumented immigrants threatened with mass deportation, as well as refugees who are being banned despite rigorous vetting; African Americans and other people of color threatened by racial policing; and Muslims, threatened with banning, monitoring, and even registration.

This movement is about much more than just making a pledge—it is about following up that pledge with concrete actions. To that end, we have launched matthew25pledge.com, a place to declare your intent to join this movement and also a resource to explain how you can act in defense of vulnerable people. You will find toolkits with information on how to support individuals and communities at the local, state, and federal level, including information on the specific legal, policy, and political threats to these groups and how to respond to them—information rooted in theological grounding and not partisan politics—and case studies of successful work in these areas.

I invite our readers, friends, allies, and partners to take the Matthew 25 Pledge and then act in the ways suggested. Our faith in Jesus Christ will not allow us to remain on the sidelines in such a time as this. ■

Jim Wallis is editor-in-chief of Sojourners magazine.

Thousands of people of faith have decided to act.

at least 10,000 as part of a deportation force.

In just one of many disturbing examples, in February ICE officials surrounded, questioned, and detained six Latino men who had just left the hypothermia shelter run by Rising Hope United Methodist Mission Church in Alexandria, Va. It is difficult to overstate the outrage and betrayal felt by so many that a church shelter for the homeless was targeted by the government to locate and detain undocumented immigrants. Amid these threats, people of faith are pledging to protect and defend undocumented immigrants under attack.

Many others are afraid too. Every black parent I know is afraid for their children, and that is a fact that white Christians, many of whom voted for Trump, must understand. Black pastors are concerned about



Candles in the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, Jerusalem/Shutterstock

By Geila Rajae

An Easter Insurrection of Hope

Accompanying Jesus in Trump's America.

HOW DOES ONE celebrate the glorious resurrection of Jesus Christ while crippled with fear?

There have been a handful of times in my life of faith that have been filled with sadness. One of those was in November when, according to research, 81 percent of white evangelical Protestants and 52 percent of white Catholics—enthusiastically or not—decided to vote for a president with a platform hostile to the teachings of Jesus. A debilitating fear and despair began burrowing into the marrow of my bones. It's hard to await the next executive order or policy change or nomination that will instill fear in my community.

As a health-care chaplain and student in public health, I'm keenly aware of the impact repeal of the Affordable Care Act would have on access to basic health care and in the lives of people I've worked with in hospitals from coast to coast. With the ACA, a young cancer survivor will still be eligible for insurance;

thousands do not have to worry about "lifetime caps" on benefits, and will not have to file for bankruptcy because their premiums skyrocketed. I have sat at the bedside of thousands who have fought to survive their illness. Now they are targeted.

Alone, it's easy to become lost in the distortion brought on by hate rhetoric. I need to connect to something with deeper roots than my fear.

In my early 20s, I felt disappointed and frustrated with the church; it didn't seem able to hold the depth of my pain. But I found the beautiful rootedness of the liturgy and now rely on the rhythms of church life as a counterbalance to confusion.

Easter tide is a season that embodies the importance of solidarity in the Christian faith. Jesus' suffering is rooted in God's willingness to endure humiliation and crucifixion for the sake of solidarity with humanity. Our liberation is bound to God's willingness to join us in suffering.

We cannot forget that while the empty tomb represented a larger transformation, the Roman Empire remained entrenched in power. Or that Christ's hands still wore the nail marks that Thomas reached to touch.

We celebrate Easter as a story of triumph over death, but the point of that death and resurrection is to allow us to persevere in the struggle of life. We celebrate the resurrection while we participate in the work of Christ. Catholic author John Dear wrote, "We opt to be with Jesus, to serve Jesus, to accompany Jesus among the world's poor in the nonviolent struggle for justice."

We engage in the *work of the people*, the liturgy, that is embodied in acts of solidarity and resistance. The transforming hope of the resurrection reminds us that "we hope for what we do not see" even while the Spirit of God "intercedes with sighs too deep for words" (Romans 8:25-26).

The Easter liturgy should be an insurrection of hope. The liturgy of the church

Our Mission

The mission of *Sojourners* magazine is to inspire hope and action by articulating the biblical call to racial and social justice, life and peace, and environmental stewardship.

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needs to translate into acts of solidarity and connection with our neighbors. We need to lend our voices and our bodies in acts that embody hope. I, and we, need the church. We need to know that the person sitting next to us can offer a hand of comfort or a shout for freedom when our hearts break and our voices falter.

By Rachel Lam

Separate and Unequal

Betsy DeVos' plan for U.S. education is at odds with Christian values.

EDUCATION IS A fundamental good and a fundamental human right. It is basic to determining social justice. Betsy DeVos, the new Secretary of Education under President Trump, has championed three major policies that further the oppression of children of color, children with special needs, and children who live in poverty. As a matter of faith, Christians should call to account those who promote injustice—especially from positions of power. “Woe to those who make unjust laws,” railed the prophet Isaiah, “to deprive the poor of their rights and withhold justice from the oppressed of my people.”

In the debate between egalitarian and libertarian approaches to education policy, DeVos is an extreme libertarian. She's a proponent of privatizing education and letting market forces and philanthropy sort

Jesus has shown us the way. It is not safe. We may experience threats or fear that shake us to our core. This Easter, I need the work of the people of God to be a transformative force in me and in the world. Alleluia. ■

Geila Rajae is a health-care chaplain and Transforming Chaplaincy Fellow in Michigan.

in for-profit charter schools, while student performance has plummeted.

DeVos has indicated that she might remove federal regulations that guarantee a “free and appropriate education” for children with special needs. She argues that these protections should be regulated at the state level, providing local governments with more “freedom of choice.” Practically speaking, this would increase the chances that children will be denied access to needed resources at local levels and create unfair distribution of assets. Strong federal regulations hold local education systems accountable to the children they are to educate. Without these protections, the most vulnerable children in our communities suffer.

DeVos advocates voucher programs and “school-choice” legislation that provide tax incentives for parents to send children to non-public schools. However, these programs undercut access to quality education for the majority. Voucher programs siphon funds away from public education and increase the gap between

high-performing and low-performing schools. Children without strong parental support or who have disabilities or behavioral issues are removed from private schools, despite their vouchers, or are never accepted in the first place because private schools have little incentive to educate these students. Thus the highest achieving students benefit most from attending the high-performing schools, leaving the children most in need in poorer quality schools with fewer resources.

DeVos displays a gross ignorance of the

The goal of education reform should not be to remove a few children from failing schools, but to create opportunity for every child.

out any inequalities. Privatized education favors children of the dominant culture and the financially elite. It drives public funding toward specialized schools and programs, such as charter schools, and away from regular public schools. DeVos claims that this promotes individual freedom and allows Christian schools to be better supported. In reality, it promotes an unfair distribution of educational resources across the few while disadvantaging the many. Michigan, where DeVos has long been active, leads the country

From the Archives

May 1991

The Root of Peacemaking

THE BOOK of Isaiah believes profoundly that God's promises will prevail in, with, and through geopolitical reality. Note what an "unreal" long shot such a conviction is. I submit that only such a conviction can energize and authorize peacemaking. For without such a passion and certitude, we will soon or late succumb to *realpolitik*. Thus the root of peacemaking is a theological possibility and not a socioeconomic possibility. That is, the chance for peace rests in the trustworthiness of God and the issue of God keeping faith with God's promises.

The text that authorizes this odd, subversive conviction has two features that are worth our noting. First, the text is poetry. It is not an argument about policy, but daring, inventive impressionistic rhetoric. Second, the text is poetry on the lips of God as a promise from God. That is, the speech of God is a beginning point for newness. The text, and every use of the text, is a political act as daring and as outrageous as was Martin Luther King Jr. when he said, "I have a dream."

Peace is a dream that is uttered first on the lips of God, a dream that speaks against all settled political reality, an act of imagination from the throne of heaven in which we are invited to participate. ■

Walter Brueggemann, a contributing editor of Sojourners, was a professor of Old Testament at Columbia Theological Seminary in Decatur, Ga., when this article appeared.



systemic oppression of children of color, the obstacles of families who grow up in poverty, and the needs of children who are atypical in development. The moral duty of the education secretary is to make decisions that best serve *all* children.

Educational opportunity should be equal with respect to existing social structures. Equal opportunity means that resources are available and appropriate for a child's unique gifts, needs, abilities, and experiences. Children who are underserved, over-burdened, or unsafe in their communities must be given access to opportunities that allow them to reach their potential as much as children who are well-resourced, able-bodied, and otherwise privileged.

By Alaura Carter

Healthy Bodies, Healthy Planet

Black and Latino churches are becoming strong voices for people and creation.

PEOPLE OF COLOR in the United States are exposed to 38 percent more asthma-producing nitrogen dioxide than are white people. People of color are twice as likely as whites to live without potable water or modern sanitation.

The "big green" environmental movement often focuses on national issues and federal policy, dividing people along partisan lines of red or blue. But churches and low-income communities focus on people and their daily lived experiences. Though both are fighting for just causes, because the environment affects us all, the big greens sometimes overlook the people on the ground or do not represent them accurately.

"We have a moral and spiritual obligation to look at the impact of climate change in general and how it impacts people, including our constituents," said Rev. Leo Woodberry, pastor of Kingdom Living Temple, an independent African-American church in Florence, S.C.

Woodberry's church takes a robust approach to local environmental issues, including looking at climate change, air quality, and environmental justice for communities that are over-burdened and vulnerable, particularly communities of color. They also look at "environomics," said Woodberry. "That's where the economy and

Models such as those DeVos manufactured in Michigan—structured to increase private wealth above all else and favoring certain people's children over others—are not the way forward, nor worthy of Christian support.

The goal of education reform should not be to remove a few children from failing schools, but to create opportunity for every child. All children should be able to learn and develop into well-functioning members of society. ■

Rachel Lam, a research scientist from the U.S. works for the National Institute of Education at Nanyang Technological University in Singapore.

environment meet and allows corporate polluters to come into communities and dump toxins because it's profitable for them," he said.

Christian faith teaches that we have an obligation to care for the earth. It also teaches us to take care of one another. We have a duty to ensure clean water, clean air, and a non-toxic environment. Black and Latino churches are becoming strong voices not just for people, but for creation; for the health of bodies, families, and neighborhoods.

Exposure to nitrogen dioxide is one of the main triggers for asthma and contributes to heart disease. Researchers estimate that if nonwhites breathed the lower NO₂ levels experienced by whites, 7,000 deaths from heart disease could be prevented among nonwhites each year.

Minority communities and the congregations that serve them deal with improper sanitation, which leads to health problems. "More than 1 percent of black people live in houses without potable water and modern sanitation, compared to less than 0.5 percent of whites," according to Bryce Covert in *The Nation*. Water contamination has largely affected those who "live in rural areas, Indigenous communities, and migrant farm-worker communities."

In South Carolina, Woodberry links

climate change to water quality. In 2015 and 2016, South Carolina had statewide flooding from unprecedented rainfall and Hurricane Matthew. In rural areas, said Woodberry, people often get their drinking water from private wells. They also often use septic tanks for waste. “When the floods come, then you have herbicides, pesticides, bacteria, and germs from the outside, and also maybe some matter that comes from the septic tanks where the waste matter is. As the water recedes, a lot of those toxins and pollutants wind up in folk’s well water,” Woodberry said.

All these are examples of why African-American and Latino churches are mobilizing on environmental issues—particularly through the People’s Climate Movement. On

We will not stand for noxious air, polluted water, and toxic neighborhoods.

April 29, broad church and civil society coalitions will join for a People’s Climate March on Washington, D.C.

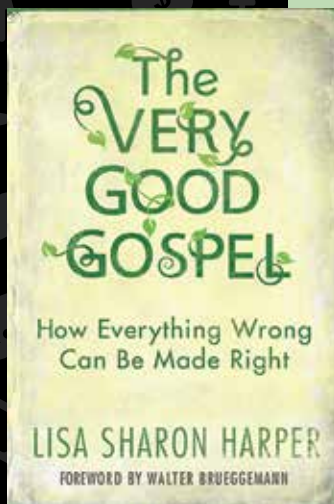
The Trump administration has shown that it does not plan to protect our earth. The administration is enacting policies and regulations that will further hurt vulnerable communities.

The People’s Climate Movement is addressing environmental justice, Indigenous rights, and the transition from fossil fuels and “dirty labor” to clean energy solutions and sustainable labor and wages.

The church can serve as a voice to lift up these issues, educate, and organize power for change. Sojourners, Franciscan Action Network, and Green Faith are working together to amplify the strength of the faith community through the experience of organizers such as Rev. Woodberry.

Denying the effects of climate change will not make them go away. And staying silent, hopeful, and prayerful is not enough to get policy change. We must be bold and clear: We will not stand for noxious air, polluted water, and toxic neighborhoods. We are moving from prayer to action to resistance. ■

Alaura Carter is climate justice campaign associate for Sojourners.



THE VERY GOOD GOSPEL TOUR

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The Very Good Gospel author
Lisa Sharon Harper

A THEOLOGY OF JUSTICE
INITIATIVE FROM

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CULTURE



About to Explode

"The first time I saw Amy León, she was standing in a church that was about to explode," writes Da'Shawn Mosley about the Brooklyn-based poet/singer/songwriter. Mosley recently talked with León about her debut album, *Something Melancholy*, including the music video for her song "Burning in Birmingham," a re-enactment of the 16th Street Baptist Church bombing that took the lives of four black girls on Sept. 15, 1963, in Birmingham, Ala.

Read more at sojo.net/melancholy.

QUOTED

“What is newer is this idea of taking offense, manufacturing indignation and outrage. I think of it as a dark side of people power.”

—Cherian George

on the tactics used worldwide by religious extremists
sojo.net/outrage

from the editors of **sojo.net**

IMMIGRATION



Remembering Japanese Incarceration

Throughout American history, most white Christians remained silent at best on questions of white supremacy, generally tacitly or actively approving of the racial sins of slavery, lynching, and segregation," wrote Kenji Kuramitsu about the 75th anniversary of the executive order that authorized "forced evacuation" of Japanese Americans from the West Coast of the U.S.

"As their Japanese American neighbors were being rounded up, few Christians voiced opposition to the government's plan of mass detention. Protestant and Catholic groups did little to oppose the incarceration orders, fearing being viewed as unpatriotic, opting instead to comfort individual families as they could, help resettle them outside the prisons if possible, or evangelize from inside the barbed wire to win new souls for Christ ...

"While white Christians of various traditions voiced opposition as executive orders affecting mostly Muslim immigrants and refugees rolled out earlier this month, many others remained silent, with recent polling suggesting that churches are more likely to fear refugees than actually welcome them. Franklin Graham, like many members of the religious right's old guard, openly defended the measures, citing national security concerns. In fact, on Graham's Facebook page in July 2015, he wrote: 'During World War 2, we didn't allow Japanese to immigrate to America ... Why are we allowing Muslims now?'"

Read more at
sojo.net/executiveorder.

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Find the Cost of Freedom

THEY CAME TO the front and waited to speak with me. They were weeping.

The day before, I sat in the front seat of a packed car. Five beautiful black women, including one of the women now in tears, rolled toward Marion, Ind.—the site of the last public lynching in the North.

On the sweltering summer night of Aug. 7, 1930, three African-American teenagers—Thomas Shipp, Abram Smith, and James Cameron—sat huddled in their jail cells in Marion. Thousands of white men, women, and children gathered outside the jailhouse, screaming and jeering—demanding blood. The three were charged with the ultimate sin against whiteness—killing a white man and raping a white woman. They were dragged from the jailhouse, beaten, and strung up on a low-hanging tree branch a block away on the courthouse square, in



Part of the crowd at the lynching of Thomas Shipp and Abram Smith in 1930.

Lawrence Beitler

blood that once dotted this grass and ground. But the blood is not gone. It is underground, mixed with the earth and mulch; it bears witness from below.

James Cameron spent four years in jail. He was eventually pardoned by then-Gov. Evan Bayh.

MONUMENTS LINE the edges of Marion's courthouse square. They celebrate the lives and sacrifices of Marion citizens—heroes. One monument, erected

one year after the lynching, commemorates

David Branson, a town founder who donated funds in 1831 to establish the courthouse. On the day of the commemoration 100 years later, a water fountain stood on the spot where they had broken ground. That same fountain still stands on the square. But no monument exists to commemorate the sacrificed lives of Thomas Shipp and Abram Smith. Even the tree is gone. Yet, still, the blood cries out from underground.

The next day, after our foray to the courthouse square, I spoke about the revolutionary acts by a company of Hebrew priests exiting Babylonian rule. Confined and controlled for generations, they were told they were created to be slaves. As they left Babylon, these priests looked their oppressors in the proverbial eye

and said No. They wrote down their own creation story and proclaimed at its climax: All humanity is created in the image of God! All humanity has been called by God and created with the capacity to exercise dominion—to help steward the world!

Indiana was one of the centers of the “second Klan,” the early 20th century vigilante war to maintain and secure white domination. Marion was the site of the North's last public ritual sacrifice to the God of whiteness.

Fourteen miles from Marion, I challenged the nearly all-white Taylor University crowd to look at the neighbor sitting next to them, to see the image of God behind their eyes, to see their inherent call to steward the world. I asked them to repeat after me: “I see ... the image of God ... in you.”

Two black women stood before me now. Holding my hands and weeping. Ariel walked the land with me in Marion the day before. Now she said through tears, “I never saw the image of God in myself before. I looked in the eyes of the white man sitting next to me. I saw the image of God in him. Then I saw it in myself.”

Tears streamed. Freedom. ■

Lisa Sharon Harper is chief church engagement officer for Sojourners and author of The Very Good Gospel: How Everything Wrong Can Be Made Right.



“I never saw the image of God in myself before.”

the center of town. For some reason, Cameron was spared. The other two were not.

The town photographer captured the moment: The mob congregated like lions around mangled prey. Lips licked, satisfied grins splayed across the faces of young women and old women, young men and old men. Floral dresses, white shirts with buckled pants, and hats atop straight-backed heads covered bursting egos as they reveled in victory. One man pointed to their ritual sacrifice, and that moment became an iconic illustration of American lynching.

Five black women walked that land 87 years later. We walked the land where the jailhouse used to stand. Now apartments and condos rise up where young black boys sat shuddering in a jail cell. A million rainfalls have washed away the

In Search of Thomas Merton

There are days when I think about going to live with the monks. My brother Richard did this in the early sixties. He never discussed the idea with me. A day simply came and my family took him to the LaGuardia Airport. We said goodbye and then he was gone.

I wonder how many men leave a home each year because of a spiritual need to either be alone or closer to someone other than a human being. Richard went away to upstate New York. Growing up in the South Bronx I never thought about upstate. How many slaves went to sleep every night tired of picking cotton but never dreaming of Canada?

Lately I listen to people in cafes or pundits on television talking about the recent presidential election. I guess this is how our nation felt after Lincoln's death. What will become of our Union now? Alas, I look into the mirror and see a wretched freeman.

There is a way a tree will talk to a black man, how it might guide him out of the woods and toward freedom. Outside my window I look at the trees, I notice their naked limbs, their leaves gone from too much weeping. I feel like a lover who wakes before daybreak only to discover love is gone.

I feel a longing, a need for prayer and fasting. Where is the choir for my soul to join? We are a people in need of song—it's time to compose new spirituals. We either dream or die.

E. Ethelbert Miller is editor of Poet Lore and former board chair of the Institute for Policy Studies in Washington, D.C.

Who Is My Neighbor?

Saciido Shaie, a Somali refugee living in Minneapolis, just wants to be part of the American fabric.

text and photos by **KATIE KORANDA**

SACIIDO SHAIE scrolled through Facebook, stopping at video of a press conference about one of President Trump's cabinet appointments.

She shook her head and mumbled about his executive order that temporarily barred refugees and immigrants from several Muslim-majority countries—including Somalia—from entering the United States.

Somali immigrants such as Shaie have been arriving in Minnesota since the 1990s. But ever since then-candidate Trump declared that Minnesota has “suffered enough” from accepting Somali refugees, the roughly 50,000 members of the Somali community in the state have become fearful. “This is the first time I have felt uncertain about my life here,” said Shaie, who is Muslim.

Shaie was a child when her family came to the U.S. in 1992 after spending almost a year in a refugee camp in Kenya, but she remembers the civil war in Somalia that led to her family's flight. As she drove away from her home with her mother, she remembers seeing a baby attempting to nurse from his dead mother's breast. “Buildings were burning, houses falling down, people dying—just chaos,” she said recently while cooking dinner in her North Minneapolis apartment. “Every time I see scenes from Syria, it reminds me of Somalia.”

Her family owned several stores in Somalia and lived in a large house. She described their life before the conflict as upper-middle class. Now she has three children ranging from 9 to 15 years old. In 2007, she cofounded a nonprofit that empowers Somali youth to be leaders in the community.

Shaie views her family as “100 percent Somali and 100 percent American” and hopes her children feel the same. “My culture is one of those things I can't live without,” she said. “The more you know your culture and other cultures, the more you'll be smart, and I want my kids to be smart.”

She wishes more people would understand that the Somali community is peace-loving.

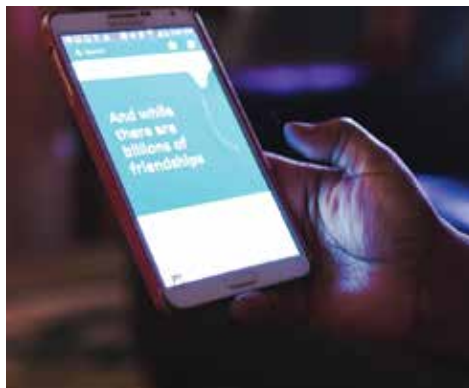
“We're here to be part of the [American] fabric, and that's all.” ■

Katie Koranda (@ktkather) is a freelance photographer and writer based in the Twin Cities.





Saciido Shaie joins co-workers at a local bowling alley. Shaie works part time as a youth leadership coordinator at Community Mediation and Restorative Services, a Minneapolis-based nonprofit that facilitates conflict resolution in neighborhoods, schools, and other community groups.



Saciido Shaie, who above and at right watches herself in a news clip produced by *The Globe and Mail*, recently talked with the Canadian publication about a Somali friend of hers. Her friend had been appealing a rejected asylum application when Trump became president, and he eventually found refuge in Toronto. Shaie, who has been in the U.S. since 1992, said she is more willing to talk with the media than are many recently arrived refugees.





Above, Saciido Shaie wipes away tears from the cold Minneapolis wind after entering a Somali women's clothing store owned by a friend. She purchases a new hijab, right, then heads to a meeting with other local Somali leaders who are planning a celebration of the newly elected Somali president, Mohamed Abdullahi Farmajo. Members of the Somali community love to talk about current events in the U.S. and Somalia, she explains: Walk into any Somali home or shop and the news will be playing and you will be asked, "What is going on?" rather than "How are you?"







At left, Shaie hugs her niece and daughter, Amran, when they arrive home from school. Amran and her cousin, who is a grade ahead of her, work on homework, paint their nails, and eat pasta—a dish that Italian colonists brought to Somalia in 1889. Many Somalis typically eat pasta by weaving it through their fingers.





This Is My Body

What do our bodies—dreadlocks, muscles, thighs, and all—teach us about God?

ON DEC. 10, 2015, shortly after then-candidate Donald Trump suggested a “total and complete shutdown” of Muslim immigration, Wheaton College professor Larycia Hawkins wrapped a hijab around her head, snapped a selfie, and posted the photo on Facebook. “I stand in religious solidarity with Muslims because they, like me, a Christian, are people of the book,” wrote Hawkins in the post. “And as Pope Francis stated last week, we worship the same God.”

It was a costly act for Hawkins: Three months later, following a controversy about whether she had violated the evangelical school’s statement of faith, she was no longer a tenured professor at Wheaton. But Hawkins doesn’t regret what she did. As she sees it, true solidarity—she calls it “embodied solidarity”—always comes with a cost.

When it comes to bodies and the church, Christians often start with St. Augustine. Though the esteemed fourth century bishop of Hippo spent a full decade debunking the dualistic heresy that material bodies were evil, he remained famously skittish about fleshy influence on the soul. By Augustine’s reading of scripture, bodies weren’t inherently wicked, but they sure were weak—especially female bodies—and you had to watch ’em or

Six writers
flesh it out.

God-only-knows what kind of sinful depravity might creep in. He often quoted the Book of Wisdom: “the corruptible body weighs down the soul and the earthly tabernacle presses down the mind that muses upon many things.” And you don’t have to be a church-history expert to trace the devastating legitimacy Augustine’s ideas gave to misogyny and other forms of body-based oppression in Christianity.

Yet as Christians in every generation have countered, we can’t write bodies off so easily. After all, smack dab in the middle of our confession of faith is a savior who suffered bodily, was crucified, and rose again. What’s more, this same savior was known for saying that love is laying down your life, and how we treat others is ultimately how we treat God. “Suffering with’ requires our entire bodies,” Hawkins later explained. “Suffering from a distance is not solidarity. Theoretical solidarity is not solidarity at all.”

Sojourners asked six Christian writers and theologians: What does your body tell you about God? Not bodies in the abstract, but *your* body: pimples, dreadlocks, muscles, belly buttons, wrinkles, thighs, and all. And though it might sound like an exercise in navel-gazing sure to make Augustine roll over in his grave, the responses we received say a lot about the *carne* part of incarnation: the radical solidarity of a God who took on flesh.

—The Editors

Photos by Shutterstock

A Living Paradox

Sometimes, the best we can do is cope.

by ELLEN PAINTER DOLLAR

UNDERSTAND REDEMPTION because my body has been redeemed. My body, broken and impaired due to a wonky gene and fragile skeleton, was made whole and capable when it nurtured three babies through pregnancy and breastfeeding. The paradoxes of Christianity—the reign of God is coming and already here, loss is gain, and foolishness is wisdom—make sense to me because I live a paradox: Everything good in my life is in some way connected to the body I have. I wish I had a different body.

Lately, my body is teaching me something about suffering and stillness. My body hurts. My joints, made of faulty raw materials and worn out by 48 years of living, ache and pop. Old injuries flare up for no good reason. (Question: “How did you get this stress fracture, Ellen?” Answer: “I walked my dog.”) My pain and the good that comes through

When I am in pain, God is with me.

it and in spite of it, my grief over wounds that will never heal and my dogged persistence in living well anyway—I am learning how to take it all in, the hurt and the healing.

Attentive stillness, otherwise known as “coping” is not our culture’s way of dealing with pain. We like stories of overcoming, not stories of coping. We’ve even made the ultimate body story, of God’s brutalized son dying on a cross, into a story of overcoming—the eternal story of God and humanity reduced to four spiritual laws, the blood debt solving the unsolvable problem.

For me, the cross is about a God who is with us when we suffer in a way that only someone who has also suffered can be. When I am in pain, God is with me. As I suffer, God suffers. There is no overcoming here, but the pain becomes a bit easier to bear. Bearing pain—coping—is what we learn to do when we realize that some pain cannot be overcome. Some pain just is.

Which is why I have no use for a Christ whose body is a costume that God put on to be more relatable: I need incarnation, a Christ whose body is so necessary for my salvation that in the central act of worship, I bite down on it, chew, and swallow. ■

Ellen Painter Dollar (@EllenPDollar) writes about disability, family, and incarnational faith and works for an Episcopal church as the parish manager. She is author of No Easy Choice: A Story of Disability, Parenthood, and Faith in an Age of Advanced Reproduction.





Messy—and Wonderfully Made

God is present amid the divine messiness of creation.

by **ROBYN HENDERSON-ESPINOZA**

I'VE BEEN THINKING about God and bodies for a long time, likely since high school when I memorized Psalm 139. I knew I was fearfully and wonderfully made, yet my experience of my body and my imagination of God were not that magnificent. I felt called into ministry, but as a gender nonconforming person in what society considers a female body, I was not eligible to follow in the path of my male counterparts.

In a world that likes the either/or logic of male/female, my body is messy. I am a queer person embodying a transgender reality, which means I identify as neither male nor female but as a nonbinary person. And it took me a while to really embrace this messiness.

Growing up, I felt confused about denominational politics, but I never felt confused about what I knew to be true from scripture: God is present in all things. And this is still true today: The messiness of my body reminds me of the swirling chaos above which, as the writer of Genesis notes, the Spirit of God hovers. God is present amid the divine messiness of creation and proclaims it wonderfully made. ■

Robyn Henderson-Espinoza, Ph.D (@irobyn) is public theologian in residence at Faith Matters Network in Nashville, Tenn., and a visiting assistant professor of ethics at the Pacific School of Religion, Graduate Theological Union, in Berkeley, Calif.

My experience of my body and my imagination of God were not that magnificent.

Material Me

How I learned that “body neutrality” is an illusion.

by **TYLER WIGG-STEVENSON**

MY WIFE AND I felt exhausted but confident at the end of our first day walking the Camino de Santiago, the ancient pilgrimage route across Spain.

The next morning my ankles didn't work.

Thus began a monthlong migration: of us, westward; of pain, around our bodies. When I taped my feet into fixed right angles at the ends of my legs, the tendonitis that had flared there shot up to my knees. I braced my knees, the pain fled to my back.

It's easy to spiritualize the bodily experience of the Camino, the “walk,” as a metaphor for life. The drive toward lightness in all you carry. The pacing necessary to persist through tendonitis.

The Camino's primary lesson for me wasn't to spiritualize materiality. It was to bring material me to the fore. My body had never caused me any real trouble: healthy, white, male, and young; average in looks and size; bearing the care that comes with economic class. My body never held me back, made me afraid or vulnerable. It had never been a prison. The greatest advantage my body had given me was the illusion of its own neutrality, invisibility.

But now my body was a problem—in the most eye-rollable of ways, of course. I was spending first-world levels of money to enjoy spiritual leisure time, and it hurt my ankles. Boo hoo, right? We got to Santiago. I got better.

Here's the simple, privileged truth that I couldn't learn until I tried to take a step and my feet refused to bear my weight: My body isn't a mere vehicle with my true self in the driver's seat. I *am* my body. Dust quickened by God. The matter matters. ■

Tyler Wigg-Stevenson is an Anglican priest, author, and activist. He lives in Toronto.

I am my body,
dust quickened
by God.



Mothering Bodies

It's the tension between self-sacrifice and self-assertion.

by MIHEE KIM-KORT

THERE'S A PHOTO of my mother a few months after she gave birth to me. Her face is fresh and young and her eyes are bright. She is slightly hunched over, with me on her back wrapped in a *podaegi*, a simple square blanket traditional to Korean mothers. Many years later my mother still sits and walks with her shoulders drawn with the remnants of pregnancies, children, and all the worldly burdens mothers carry for us. She has tired feet and crow's feet. When I look in the mirror, I see the same weight and burden that remain from my own pregnancies, but also shreds of desires and dreams, many unfulfilled. My feet hurt, too, and my back aches.

But my eyes are always drawn to the whereabouts of my daughter, Anna. I marvel at her straight back and her feet buoyed by a carefree, innocent existence. I want to hold her in that space for as long as possible.

As I vacillate between these images, my mind turns to God-Incarnate in Jesus the Christ, who invited us to let him carry our burdens. Who said we would need to eat his flesh and drink his blood in order to have life. Who talked about the ways he would lay his life down for us.

That's what I see in bodies of mothers, women, and girls: a eucharistic and cannibalistic sacrifice of bodies that live, move, and breathe through work that sustains other life—a beautiful kind of submission. At the same time, I see violence and death, the result of human systems that sometimes leave women little choice but to give of their bodies, whether whole or in pieces. It's the tension between self-sacrifice and self-assertion that women of color describe as “the bridge called my back.”

The hand of the Holy Spirit nudges me forward with the words of Isaiah tattooed on my back: “For you shall go out in joy, and be led back in peace.” The way we lay down our lives may look like our backs stooped by carrying a child, backs buckled under the weight of bearing hope, or backs engaged in the everyday acts of motherhood, radical signs of strength and creativity that usher others from death to life. ■

Mihee Kim-Kort (@miheekimkort) is a Presbyterian minister, mother, and writer in Bloomington, Ind.

My eyes are always drawn to the whereabouts of my daughter.

Hidden in Rolls of Fat

For years I believed I had ruined
the image of God in me.

by **J. NICOLE MORGAN**

I LOVE SWIMMING in open water. I wade jiggly thighs into the sea, and my large arms, swoops of fat hanging down, arch over waves and pull my body through the current. Afterward, I sink down onto a beach blanket. The sand does not creak under my weight as chairs often do. The sun is not too small to reach every expansive inch of my dimply, stretch-marked skin.

For years I believed I had ruined the image of God in me, hidden it in rolls of fat that cascaded down my body. Yet my body, with its soft embrace and immovable stance, reflects parts of the image of God not as easily seen in slim-

I find a savior who knows what it means for people to miss the holy in pursuit of the socially acceptable.

mer bodies. I am soft and solid; slow(er) and deeper; highly visible and easily ignored. When I believe that my body reflects the image of God, then I dig into these descriptors in search of what more I can learn about God's heart.

These attributes are often ignored or derided when culture names thinness as holy. In learning what my body reveals about God, I find a savior who knows what it means for people to miss the holy in pursuit of the socially acceptable.

I also become more aware of the way others' bodies have been dismissed as not good enough to bear the image of God. Fat-accepting theology demands that we proclaim and embrace the truth that God's image is not too small to be found in every body, no matter its size, color, gender, or ability. ■

J. Nicole Morgan (@jnicolemorgan) is a Christian fat-acceptance advocate who lives near Atlanta. She is currently working on a book about fatness and faith, forthcoming from Fortress Press/Theology for the People.

The Goodness of Gathered Flesh

What we do with our bodies matters.

by **DREW G.I. HART**

MY BLACK BODY was tired after a full day of teaching. When I got home I hugged my wife, gave high fives to my boys, and picked up my 3-month-old son. Whenever I sit and hold him, my two boys swarm, putting their heads a few inches from his face, so I must repeatedly ask them to back up. It's good being with them, even when they give me grey hairs. It is really good. We touch, embrace, and interact with one another in ways that I treasure. The intimacy of our bodies together teaches me that our human flesh is good.

Unfortunately, I had a meeting to attend that night, which disrupted our moment. Religious leaders were mobilizing in our neglected, majority-black city of Harrisburg, Pa., considering how to better organize our communities. I was a co-facilitator of the conversations, so being absent was not really an option. Other people, who also needed to muster energy to get into that church basement, were counting on my bodily presence.

I arrived early, and there were already 15 bodies huddled outside the church in the cold winter weather, drawn from all over the city to join each other in this space. I greeted people as we waited for the doors to be unlocked. It was good to see familiar and strange faces, each person desiring to embody justice, mercy, and humility in their neighborhoods.

Once inside, we talked with one another, encountering the truth-telling, uninhibited joy, and extended grace that are only known through the goodness of our gathered flesh. Not all the insights that were shared were revelatory; some information could have been discovered more efficiently with a book or a Google search. Yet something is lost if our distinct bodies are never together, collectively participating in our Creator's liberative activity for justice and peace.

Our bodies are differently abled. We cannot all pursue justice the same way. But that night I was reminded what we do with our bodies matters. The spaces our bodies inhabit, and the bodies our bodies come alongside of, actually matter, since God has created and set them apart for holy use. ■

Drew G. I. Hart (@DruHart) is an assistant professor in theology at Messiah College and the author of Trouble I've Seen: Changing the Way the Church Views Racism.

It's good being
with them, even
when they give
me grey hairs.

Shattering on Climate Change

Seven in 10 Americans don't discuss global warming with family or friends. It's time to start. Here's how.

by **TERESA MYERS, CONNIE ROSER-RENOUF,
and EDWARD MAIBACH**

More than 97 percent of climate scientists agree that human-caused climate change is happening here and now. Yet many Americans are unaware of this scientific consensus.

Meanwhile, evidence of climate change is mounting—rising seas, retreating glaciers, and extreme weather—as are their effects on human health and well-being, everything from more lung disease and vector-borne illnesses to injuries and deaths from extreme weather events.

In the face of these sobering realities, the Trump administration is taking steps to reverse progress the U.S. has made on carbon pollution by eliminating the Clean Power Plan, radically shrinking the Environmental Protection Agency, reversing environmental safety regulations, and potentially withdrawing from the Paris climate agreement.

However, we are not helpless, and the situation is not hopeless. In many ways, the prospects for progress in combating climate change are good. The costs of clean, renewable energy, such as solar and wind, are dropping precipitously, and a large majority of Americans want us to transition quickly away from fossil fuels, regulate carbon emissions, and abide by the climate agreement reached in Paris last year. National environmental organizations are seeing rapid increases in donations and volunteerism from those who oppose federal efforts to dismantle environmental protections. But it's not enough.

Building a strong national movement to protect the climate requires many voices. The voices of Christians are especially needed. And many are speaking up. "The poor, the disenfranchised, those already living on the edge, and those who contributed least to this problem are also those at greatest risk to be harmed by it. That's not a scientific issue; that's a moral issue," wrote Katharine Hayhoe, a

Marco Bindi/Reuters

A drop of water falls from a melting piece of Argentina's Perito Moreno glacier in Patagonia. Some glaciers are thawing so fast they could disappear in 25 years.

the Silence



"Those already living on the edge, who contributed That's not a scientific issue; that's a moral issue."

renowned climate scientist and evangelical Christian, on The Conversation website. She has noted that, "As scientists we don't know a lot about suffering, but as Christians we do. And we know that part of the reason we're here in this world is to help people who are suffering." Pope Francis has made the case that climate change is one of the principal challenges facing humanity and that it is a moral imperative for Christians to rise to the challenge.

Scientific research demonstrates that climate change disproportionately affects the world's poor. The 2014 U.S. National Climate Assessment, for example, concluded that "certain people and communities are especially vulnerable, including children, the elderly, the sick, the poor, and some communities of color." Caring for the poor and vulnerable is a biblical mandate, from the Hebrew scriptures through the New Testament. The same love of God that compels us to share the good news of Jesus Christ propels us to take seriously the suffering that human-caused climate change is inflicting on these most vulnerable of populations.

What can I do?

It is easy to feel swamped by the enormity of climate change. However, there are many things individuals can do.

■ **First**, identify and investigate your own questions. Do you feel uncertain about how climate change works or to what extent humans have contributed to the problem? Do you understand the ways that the most poor and vulnerable are affected? Online sites such as the National Climate Assessment, NASA's Global Climate Change, and Skeptical Science are excellent tools to bolster your climate knowledge.

■ **Second**, break the climate silence. Initiate conversations about climate change. Surveys by Yale's Program on Climate Change Communication consistently show that family and friends are among the most trusted sources Americans rely on to learn about the climate. In fact, only climate scientists are trusted more than family and friends as sources of information about climate change.

However, Yale's research also shows that seven in 10 Americans rarely or never discuss global warming with family and friends; only one in five hear people they know talk about it at least once a month. The research also shows that Christians—especially evangelicals—are among the least likely to be convinced that serious, human-caused climate change is occurring. Therefore, it is crucial that Christians who are concerned about the impact of climate change on the poor and vulnerable talk with—and listen to—their family and friends. It is not necessary to be an

expert on climate change to initiate these conversations. Rather, sharing what you have learned, why you are convinced (along with any ongoing questions you have), or how you are taking action can all kick-start a conversation that does not descend into polarized conflict.

The 'six Americas' of global warming

For the past eight years, a team of scientists at George Mason's Center for Climate Change Communication has researched U.S. public opinion on climate change as part of Yale's program. We have identified six distinct groups—what we call "Global Warming's Six Americas." These groups range from the "alarmed," who are most convinced of the urgent nature of the problem, to the "dismissive," who are least convinced that climate change is real or a threat to the well-being of the earth and its people.

Many Americans think that climate opinion is black and white—like the two ends of the spectrum. But in reality, only 18 percent of Americans belong to the "alarmed" group and only 9 percent to the "dismissive" segment. Another 5 percent (the "disengaged") hold virtually no beliefs about the issue, while 11 percent (the "doubtful") aren't sure whether climate change is happening but are convinced that if it is happening, humans aren't causing it—it's just a natural cycle. Just over half of Americans fall into either the "concerned" (34 percent) or "cautious" (23 percent) groups. These people think that human-caused global warming is occurring, but aren't entirely sure and aren't doing much about it.

Understanding this diversity of opinion enables varying entry points into conversations with friends and family members: Investigate where they stand, ask how they arrived at their conclusions and questions, and proceed from where they are, rather than from where you want them to be.

For some, especially those in the "doubtful" and "dismissive" segments, the conversation need not be about climate change per se; indeed, that might not be the most productive conversation. Research sponsored by ClearPath, an organization founded to "spur conservatives to be leaders on clean energy," strongly suggests addressing climate change by actively taking it out of the conversation. Instead, you could talk about clean energy and the many good reasons for embracing and transitioning to it in your home, town, state, and nation. Nearly all Americans, on the left and the right, see the value of a clean-energy future. These conversations can acknowledge climate change as one of the good reasons to make this transition, but they should not lead with climate change.

For example, you might say: "We should expand the use of clean energy regardless of the debate over

least to this problem, are at greatest risk.

climate, because it will reduce our dependence on foreign oil, reduce air pollution, and improve public health.” Embracing clean energy is something that everyone can do. Many homeowners can get solar panels installed at no cost, and save themselves a bundle, or buy wind energy for a very small premium. Businesses and municipalities can do the same. You might suggest these ways of embracing clean energy to your neighbors, your congregation, your employer, the companies you patronize, and your municipal, state, and federal representatives.

Our conversations should stress comprehensive solutions to address climate change, because “We are faced not with two separate crises, one environmental and the other social, but rather with one complex crisis which is both social and environmental,” as Pope Francis put it. “Strategies for a solution demand an integrated approach to combating poverty, restoring dignity to the excluded, and at the same time protecting nature.” For example, two endeavors in West Virginia—Solar Holler and the Coalfields Development Corporation—take seriously the hardships endured by communities transitioning away from fossil fuel.

Actions are contagious

The best way to lead is by example. If you use clean energy sources, improve the energy efficiency of your home, buy green products, and support environmentally responsible political candidates, your actions give you something to talk to others about and also make you a more convincing agent of change.

People tend to act in the same ways as those around them. Your actions can influence even people you’ve never met. Studies of social networks by Nicholas A. Christakis and James H. Fowler, authors of *Connected*, have shown that action is contagious and spreads through communities from person to person with about three degrees of influence—from you to your friend, to your friend’s friend, to your friend’s friend’s friend.

Joining local efforts by organizations such as Citizens’ Climate Lobby and Interfaith Power and Light is an effective way to work together to propel action on climate change. Seek guidance from leaders in your local faith community about ways to tackle the issue, including talking about the moral implications of climate change.

By breaking the climate silence, Christians can bring light, compassion, and determination to the national conversation on global warming: Light, by helping people understand the gravity of the threat; compassion, by recognizing that those most harmed are innocent victims who deserve our protection; and determination, by refusing to accept any future that is not sustainable.

We have a moral imperative to take action on climate change. All of us are called to act. ■

Teresa Myers is an assistant research professor at the Center for Climate Change Communication at George Mason University in Fairfax, Va. Connie Roser-Renouf is an associate research professor and Edward Maibach is director of the same program.

The Consensus Grows

A survey conducted in November after the election asked U.S. registered voters for their views on current and proposed global warming and clean energy policies.

69% of respondents said the U.S. should participate in the Paris agreement to limit climate change, compared with only 13 percent who said the U.S. should not.

66% said the U.S. should reduce its greenhouse gas emissions, regardless of what other countries do.

62% said the president and 63 percent said Congress should do more to address global warming.

72% said corporations and industry should do more to address global warming.

66% supported requiring fossil fuel companies to pay a carbon tax and using the money to reduce other taxes (such as income tax) by an equal amount—often referred to as a “revenue neutral carbon tax.”

Source: “Politics and Global Warming, November 2016,” by Yale University and George Mason University.

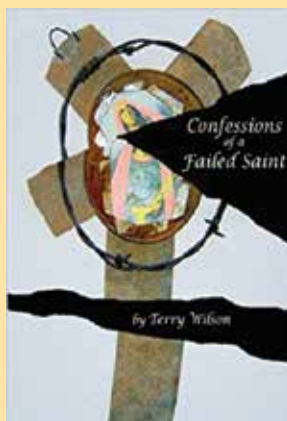


GREAT READS

"We read to know we are not alone."

—William Nicholson, screenwriter of *Shadowlands*

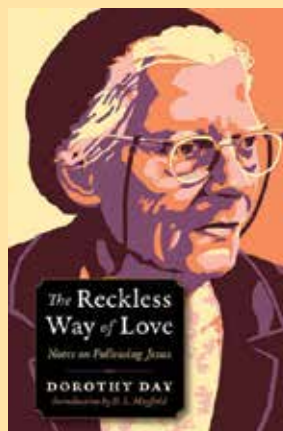
Inside *Sojourners'* Great Reads book section, you will find books to encourage and challenge you, accompany your faith journey, and expand your view of justice. Topics range from modern-day Bible studies to community development, transgender identity to social justice advice. Find which one speaks to you. Visit sojo.net/greatreads.



Confessions of a Failed Saint

Terry Wilson
PARSE
amazon.com

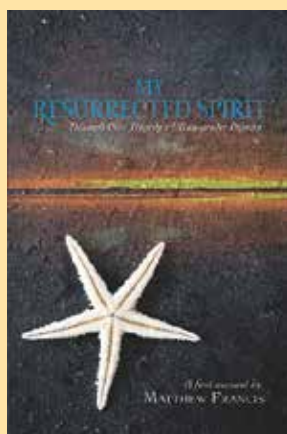
'Wise, Witty, and Hilarious! A pilgrimage guaranteed to strike a chord in the heart of spiritual seekers everywhere.' —Sean Murphy, author of *One Bird, One Stone*



The Reckless Way of Love: Notes on Following Jesus

Dorothy Day
Plough Publishing House
plough.com

How do you follow Jesus without burning out? In this guidebook, Dorothy Day offers hard-earned wisdom gained through decades of seeking to know Jesus and to follow his example in her own life.



My Resurrected Spirit

Matthew Francis
Freedom to Flourish
amazon.com

A memoir about overcoming generational violence, mental illness, and cancer while transitioning from female to male and maintaining a Christian faith.



When Changing Nothing Changes Everything: The Power of Reframing Your Life

Laurie Polich Short
InterVarsity Press
ivpress.com

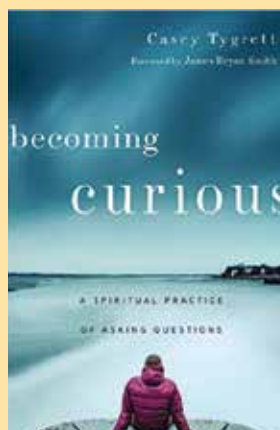
Your perspective has the power to transform your life. Using four different lenses, Laurie Short shows how you can reframe whatever comes your way, recognizing that every detail, good and bad, is in God's hands.



White Awake: An Honest Look at What It Means to Be White

Daniel Hill
InterVarsity Press
ivpress.com

Showing us the path to cultural awakening, this timely book offers a new perspective on being white and empowers us to be agents of reconciliation in our divided world. (Coming September 2017)



Becoming Curious: A Spiritual Practice of Asking Questions

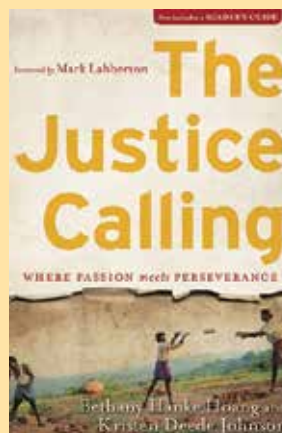
Casey Tygett
InterVarsity Press
ivpress.com

In this engaging and interactive book, pastor and spiritual director Casey Tygett explores the benefits of a healthy curiosity in our spiritual lives. Come and discover the power of asking questions.



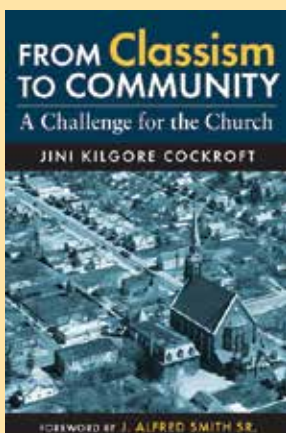
The Year of Small Things
Sarah Arthur & Erin F. Wasinger
Brazos Press
yearofsmallthings.com

"This is the most provocative and profound book I've read in a long time. . . Deeply moving—and necessary—for the faith community."—Joel Salatin



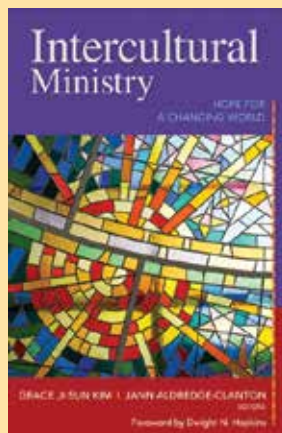
The Justice Calling
Bethany Hanke Hoang & Kristen Deede Johnson
Brazos Press
thejusticecallingbook.com

Christianity Today 2017 Book Award Winner "The Justice Calling [is] essential reading for those who are beginning the journey of considering how justice is integral to the life of following Jesus."—Brian Bantum, *Christian Century*



**From Classism to Community:
A Challenge for the Church**
Jini Kilgore Cockroft
Judson Press
judsonpress.com

A practical model for service, inclusion, and developing community that restores, empowers, and includes the poor and forgotten.



**Intercultural Ministry:
Hope for a Changing World**
Grace Ji-Sun Kim and Jann Aldredge-Clanton
Judson Press
judsonpress.com

Explores the theological foundations for intercultural churches and ministry and provides strategies for building them, with hopes to transform the church by advancing racial equality, justice, and reconciliation.



**The Fierce Urgency of
Prophetic Hope**
Wendell L. Griffen
Judson Press
judsonpress.com

Offers leadership on how to deal with the challenges and opportunities of being people of prophetic hope in a divisive time.



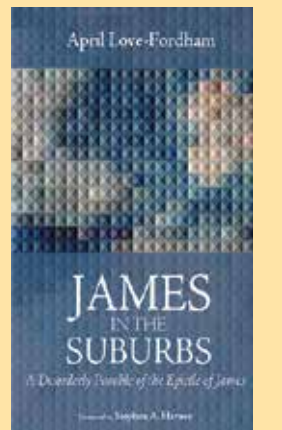
**Reunion: The Good News of Jesus
for Seekers, Saints, and Sinners**
Bruxy Cavey
Herald Press
amazon.com

Jesus' message changed the world. Then the world changed the message. Discover your citizenship in the Jesus NATION, where you might be ready to die for a cause but never willing to kill for one.



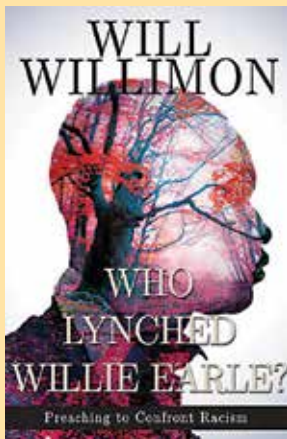
**Dismantling Injustice: A Disorderly
Parable of the Song of Solomon**
April Love-Fordham
Wipf & Stock Publishers
aprillovefordham.com

A radical interpretation of the Song of Solomon creates the backdrop for an unforgettable story taking place in the halls of our nation's capital. If you want to understand the powers at work in the world today, this book is a must read. Contains an 8-week study guide.



**James in the Suburbs: A Disorderly
Parable of the Epistle of James**
April Love-Fordham
Wipf & Stock Publishers
aprillovefordham.com

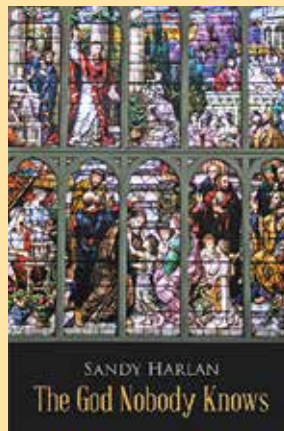
An engaging modern parable about life in the suburbs wraps around the Epistle of James making its teachings immediately applicable. Readers will be challenged to share—rather than consume—God's blessings. Contains a 12-week group study guide.



Who Lynched Willie Earle?

Will Willimon
Abingdon Press
abingdonpress.com

Effective preaching demands a more perceptive understanding of race and faith. Willimon uses Pastor Hawley Lynn's sermon about the last lynching in Greenville, South Carolina, to illustrate a more faithful proclamation of the gospel today.

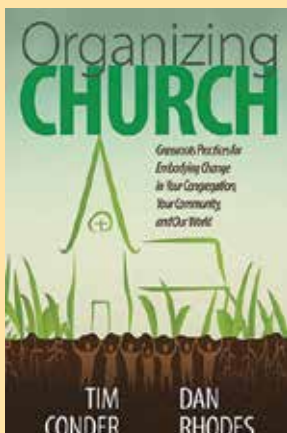


The God Nobody Knows

Sandy Harlan
Westbow Press
westbowpress.com

"Meditation on contemporary faith and ... new ways of viewing God ... thoughtfully constructed arguments about contemporary Christianity and the questions believers should ask themselves in today's world."

—Kirkus Indie Review



Organizing Church: Grassroots Practices for Embodying Change in Your Congregation, Your Community, and Our World

Tim Conder and Dan Rhodes
Chalice Press
chalicepress.com

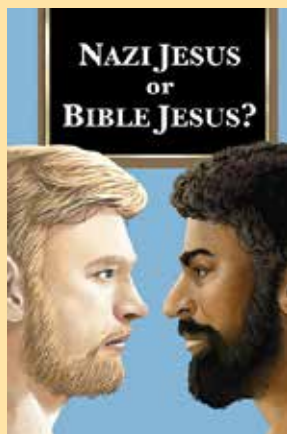
Turn your church into a social justice powerhouse. *Organizing Church* engages community organizing principles to help revitalize and empower churches as change-agents. *Organizing Church* is the essential guide for joining the social justice movement now.



Bayard Rustin: The Invisible Activist

Jacqueline Houtman, Walter Naegle, and Michael G. Long
QuakerPress of FGC
quakerbooks.org

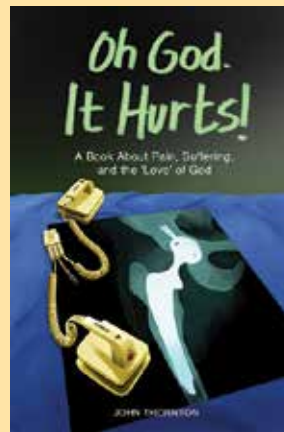
Resister. Black. Gay. Pacifist. Activist. Quaker. Bayard Rustin was all of these things, in addition to being the strategist behind many key moments of the civil rights movement. Discover *The Invisible Activist* at QuakerBooks.org.



Nazi Jesus or Bible Jesus?

John Thornton
amazon.com

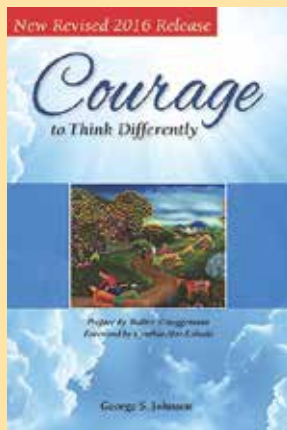
John Thornton uses the metaphor of "Nazi Jesus" to address many social ills of today. As Jesus said, there are wolves in "sheep's clothing." Basically, the question comes down to who will you follow? Will it be a Nazi Jesus or the Jesus of the Bible? This book is available to purchase as a Kindle or as a paperback.



Oh God. It Hurts!

John Thornton
amazon.com

This book asks many tough questions about why people suffer and does not offer easy answers. If you have ever wondered what meanness does to a child, or how church people can leave lasting scars, *Oh God. It Hurts!* will shed some light on those and many other issues. This book is available to purchase as a Kindle or as a paperback.



Courage to Think Differently

George S. Johnson
amazon.com

"Johnson sees clearly that the Gospel is not about saving souls, but about the rule of God and the way it impinges on economics and politics. The book is a remarkable cast of courageous activist thinkers."

—Walter Brueggemann

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There Are None So Blind...

WE ARE TOLD, in the classic story of Oedipus, about the king who managed to bring devastation to his city and family, a king who, when he finally learned the truth of his crimes, blinded himself.

I thought of that epic tragedy when I read of one decision by our current ruler, one event amid all the dozens of others. And this one was less immediately tragic—it didn't involve pulling an immigrant with a brain tumor out of a hospital for

education budget by 94 percent. But the one that future historians will, I think, obsess over is the satellites.

Consider: In the last few months, we've learned that 2016 set the all-time record for the hottest recorded year on planet earth. We've seen, over the last few years, the highest wind speeds ever recorded in one ocean basin after another, as record-hot water produces amped-up hurricanes. An iceberg a quarter the size of Wales (not a whale—Wales) is about to break off from the Larsen Ice Shelf in the Antarctic. And we're going to blind ourselves? We're going to start paying *less* attention?

In any rational world, we'd be launching satellites as fast as we could to try and get a handle on exactly what's in store. And we'd be cutting carbon and methane as fast as we could to try and lessen the damage. Instead, at the same time, Trump's EPA announced that the oil and gas industry would no longer have to even *collect* data about how much methane they were spewing into the atmosphere, and the news emerged that the administration was about to reduce targets for increased fuel efficiency for cars and trucks.

But in the world run by the fossil-fuel industry, knowing what's coming at us must be

avoided at all costs. They've been running a disinformation game for more than a quarter century now, investing huge sums in setting up "think tanks" to try and spread the falsehood that global warming is a matter of scientific debate. That effort is finally failing—somehow, each heatwave and drought makes it a little less credible. So now they've got to actually stop the flow of data. They've got to go pull the plug.

Think about that. Human ingenuity has allowed us to build satellites that can fly into space, with sensors that can look back at the earth in exquisite detail, offering us a clear warning about the danger ahead. And instead of celebrating that triumph, we're now going to pretend it doesn't exist. We're going to blind ourselves—or, rather, our ruler is going to try to blind all of us.

You know what they say: The first time's a tragedy and the second time's an apocalypse. ■



Bill McKibben, a Sojourners contributing editor, is the Schumann Distinguished Scholar at Middlebury College in Vermont and founder of 350.org.

The fossil-fuel industry has been running a disinformation game for more than a quarter century.

deportation, nor forcing transgender Americans to produce a birth certificate before they pee. No, this tragedy will play out over a longer time.

In early March (and, of course, late on a Friday afternoon), his new team at the Commerce Department announced that they intended to cut the climate satellite program at the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration by 22 percent. They proposed a lot of other terrible cuts the same day: virtually zeroing out the environmental justice programs at EPA and cutting the environmental



By Wendy Besel Hahn

Bunker or **Bridge?**

At first my “resistance library” was a protective wall. But is that really what books are made for?

PRIOR TO THE ELECTION, I read J.D. Vance’s best-selling memoir, *Hillbilly Elegy*, in an attempt to understand Trump’s appeal to lower-income white Americans. However, this didn’t prepare me for the 81 percent of white evangelical Christians, some of them my extended family members, who cast their ballots for, it seemed to me, religious intolerance, misogynistic policies, environmental neglect, and white privilege. On Nov. 9, 2016, I awoke to find not just a world divided between Democrats and Republicans, but two versions of Christianity at odds with one another. Clearly, I had missed something.

Once initial shock over the election results subsided, I began purchasing books—stockpiling them. Perhaps I could build a wall of literature for protection, one of those enormous noise barriers separating residential neighborhoods from freeways, something to block out the racism and bigotry I assumed were behind the election results. What did theologians have to say about these topics? How had previous generations faced authoritarian threats? I searched progressive Christian reading lists: Howard Thurman’s *Jesus and the Disinherited*, Drew G.I. Hart’s *Trouble I’ve Seen*, Dietrich Bonhoeffer’s *The Cost of Discipleship* ... The list grew. I couldn’t stop. Amassing these titles and stacking them higher made me feel righteous. I began referring to them as my “resistance library.”

Illustration by Jon Krause



Inside CultureWatch

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Anne Colamosca reviews books on Martin Luther

books weapons, walls to divide people, or rather gates through which we explore ideas about God?

My unease grew as I sat in church one Sunday and listened to a reading from Isaiah 58:4: “Look, you fast only to quarrel and to fight and to strike with a wicked fist. Such fasting as you do today will not make your voice heard on high.” God was addressing the Israelites after their return from exile in Babylon, but the part about the fist sounded

Were books weapons, walls to divide people, or gates through which we explore ideas about God?

familiar. In my anger, I had become sanctimonious about my reading.

My wall seemed to crumble a little more as I listened to verses 6 to 8: “Is not this the fast that I choose: To loose the bonds of injustice, to undo the thongs of the yoke, to let the oppressed go free, and to break every yoke? Is it not to share your bread with the hungry, and bring the homeless poor into your house; when you see the naked, to cover them, and not to hide yourself from your own kin? Then your light shall break forth like the dawn, and your healing shall spring up quickly; your vindicator shall go before you, the glory of the Lord shall be your rear guard.”

My collection wasn’t meant to browbeat others. If I participated in the discipline of learning to enlarge myself while shaming others, I’d missed the mark. True service to God involved the good of the community, not merely the edification of the individual.

Prior to the election, consuming theological writing had been part of a quest to find a divine love far more inclusive than that the Religious Right had portrayed to me throughout my childhood. It was holy. Turning pages was an attempt to understand different religious traditions, to expand the definition of God, to understand the historical context of Jesus, to relate with the oppressed. It wasn’t about being correct. It was about communication. Through others’ writings, I had experienced a loving, accepting God. My resistance library could be a means to share

Continued on Page 39

Existing titles from my bookshelves joined new acquisitions to form adjoining soundproof panels. Some portray a radically different God from the one with whom I grew up: Marcus J. Borg’s *Meeting Jesus Again for the First Time*, Walter Brueggemann’s *The Prophetic Imagination*, and Scott W. Gustafson’s *Behind Good and Evil*. Rachel Held Evans’s memoir, *Faith Unraveled*, details how she moved away from fundamentalism. Her faith journey mirrors parts of my own. After further rearranging within my bookcases, I erected another section dedicated to world religions. *God Is Not One*, Stephen Prothero’s book on eight world religions, sat next to Reza Aslan’s primer on Islam, *No god but God*, and the biography *Mormon Enigma: Emma Hale Smith*.

Surrounded by all of these words, I felt fortified. I could safely clench my fist around any book and shake it at the 81 percent to assert that my definition of Christianity was valid. Was that the point, though? Were

New & Noteworthy



From *Rikers: An American Jail*

PRISON NIGHTMARES

Rikers: An American Jail, a documentary film from journalist Bill Moyers, draws on interviews with former detainees at a notorious facility, New York City’s Rikers Island, for insight into the violence and futility of U.S. mass incarceration. Airing on PBS in May, with faith-based viewers’ guide available for download. rikersfilm.org

NOT JUST A GAME

Jackie Robinson: A Spiritual Biography, by Michael G. Long and Chris Lamb, details how faith helped Robinson, the first black baseball player in the major leagues, endure abuse and fight for civil rights, on and off the field. WJK

MIND THE GAP

Economist Thomas Piketty’s landmark 2014 book on growing wealth inequality, *Capital in the Twenty-First Century*, is brilliant, but daunting at more than 600 pages. Enter *Pocket Piketty*, by inequality data specialist Jesper Roine, a portable and accessible introduction to Piketty’s vital and evermore-timely ideas and analysis. OR Books

LOVE AND DISSENT

With both love songs and protest anthems such as “Corrupción,” Ani Cordero’s new Latin rock album, *Querido Mundo (Dear World)*, is a full-hearted call to embrace life and social justice in the face of disturbing politics in the U.S. and around the world. anicordero.info

Fake Populism at the FCC

WITH EACH PASSING week of his administration, the epic scale of the deception Donald Trump pulled off last November becomes more evident.

In his last TV ad of the presidential campaign, Donald Trump decried “a global power structure that is responsible for the economic decisions that have robbed our working class, stripped our country of its wealth and put that money into the pockets of a handful of large corporations and political entities.” Two weeks earlier, when the AT&T-Time Warner merger was announced, Trump said: “As an example of the power structure I’m fighting, AT&T is buying Time Warner and thus CNN, a deal we will not approve in my administration because it’s too much concentration of power in the hands of too few.” Later he added, “Deals like this destroy democracy.”

Since then, of course, the great champion of the people has given



Ajit Pai, a former Verizon lawyer, is now chair of the FCC.

a media merger he didn’t like. For example, Pai, who has worked as a lawyer for Verizon, said he would have approved the Comcast-Time Warner Cable merger that the Obama FCC blocked in 2015.

Of course, candidate Trump was right in his original opposition to the AT&T-Time Warner merger, and for at least some of the right reasons. AT&T is currently the country’s second biggest provider of wireless services and a major provider of pay-TV and internet service. If this merger goes through, AT&T would also control HBO, CNN, TBS, and Warner Brothers Pictures.

Historically, federal anti-monopoly law used to frown upon the same company controlling both the product (in this case news and entertainment content) and the delivery mechanism (the wireless or cable networks). Back in the day, the Hollywood movie studios had to sell off their theater chains for this very reason. But Pai and his Republican allies on the FCC (who now comprise a majority) see no problem with a very few giant corporations exercising a chokehold on American news media and culture. In response to the AT&T move

on Time Warner, Verizon (AT&T’s biggest competitor) has doubled down on its investment in digital content by acquiring first AOL, which includes the Huffington Post, and now Yahoo. In this environment, we can expect that some giant internet service provider will make a move on Netflix.

Digital content producers are especially

Reuters

attractive to internet service providers if the end of net neutrality is in sight. Currently, internet service providers, cable or wireless, are considered public utilities (like railroads or electric companies) and so are prohibited from giving faster download speeds to content providers that they own or that pay them extra for the privilege. All internet content—whether from Indymedia or sojo.net or Glenn Beck’s The Blaze, for that matter—has to be treated the same.

If Pai succeeds in reversing these rules, a newly expanded AT&T could, for instance, put CNN on the fast track and throttle Fox News. That, in itself, might not be so bad, but in the process it would also allow any internet service provider to throttle Democracy Now or the BBC.

I’m guessing that narrower media options and more power to the corporate establishment are not exactly what the Rust Belt voters who gave Trump his electoral edge were looking for. But it’s what they got. The question now is what they, and we, are going to do about it. ■

Danny Duncan Collum teaches writing at Kentucky State University in Frankfort. He is the author of the novel White Boy.



I’m guessing that a more powerful corporate establishment is not exactly what Rust Belt Trump voters were looking for.

us a Treasury secretary (Steven Mnuchin) who, as a hedge fund manager and banker, made a specialty not only of “robb[ing] our working class,” but foreclosing on their homes to boot. And now the candidate who condemned the AT&T-Time Warner merger as oligarchic and anti-democratic has become a president whose most recent comment on the merger was simply, “I haven’t seen any of the facts, yet.” Worse still, Trump has appointed a Federal Communications Commission chair (Ajit Pai) who has promised to undo the Obama-era net neutrality regulations, and who never met

Continued from Page 37

this good news with others.

In the following weeks, I posted book titles and pictures through social media and asked for recommendations. I'll admit it still bordered on the boastful side. Yet the action engaged me in a larger conversation. Several friends weighed in with comments on books they enjoyed or suggestions for future study.

I belong to an Evangelical Lutheran Church of America congregation in Reston, Va., that concludes each service with the benediction: "Go in peace to celebrate, think, and serve." Our community fosters discussion about theology and social justice. One Sunday, I bundled up some books and took them to church, where I loaned out a few to fellow members, including my pastor. My hope is that we can talk about the state of Christianity in the United States. If enough people are interested, we'll choose a title to read as a small group that meets for an adult forum each Sunday before the worship services. Books might become an entry point into important exchanges.

Reading books that affirm my view of an inclusive God was only a first step. Christ calls us to stand with the oppressed by listening to their accounts. Beyond exploring issues of racism and bigotry, my library ought to include titles that tackle divisive topics such as abortion and poverty in nuanced ways. To avoid dwelling in an echo chamber, I even plan eventually to solicit book and article suggestions from those who support the current administration. (Note to my relatives: Don't send books. I'm not there yet.)

I'll confess I have yet to make it through even a portion of my recently purchased volumes. This type of reading isn't always easy. The first chapters of *Trouble I've Seen* evoked a sense of guilt about my white privilege. That response is healthy. I need to be challenged. I want to move beyond my comfort zone. Nonetheless, it wasn't the best "before bed" reading. I also craved a sense of comfort, something that picking up Rebecca Solnit's *Hope in the Dark* accomplished as it reminded me how activism involves seemingly ordinary steps that matter in the long term. Striking a balance in what to read, and when, seems imperative.

While constructing my library, I discovered that reading has been part of my daily



A scene from
Kong: Skull Island

OPPOSE WITHOUT HATRED

ONE OF THE characters in the original *King Kong* (1933) says that "it was beauty killed the beast." This line is spoken after the magnificent ape is hounded to his death by buzzing planes that knock him off the side of the Empire State Building, so it's not strictly true. Beauty is actually what he wanted to *save*; I guess we could say it was the military-industrial-special-effects complex that killed him.

It's a nice turn of phrase, nonetheless, and it came to mind recently when two of the biggest-scale movies of the year were released a week apart. The enormous monkey homage *Kong: Skull Island* and Disney's live-action remake of its own *Beauty and the Beast* don't immediately invite comparison, but the stories they're based on are actually about the same thing: finding vulnerability behind terrifying facades.

The tenderness of the original Kong's approach to Ann Darrow (Fay Wray) and Belle's openness to the light that might be hiding behind the Beast's frightening demeanor are mirrors. But it's inaccurate to think that the transformation—or the risk—in these stories travels only in one direction. Ann gets rescued and the Beast turns back into a man. But Kong also experiences love and Belle undergoes a rite of passage that leaves her more whole than before.

What initiates these changes is the

risk taken by the vulnerable to face something fearful and imagine that they might be looking at something more than just a monster. Behind every face, there's always something that could lead us to empathize with even our worst enemies. (There are more cinematic examples in films as diverse as *Short Cuts*, *Jean de Florette*, *Being There*, *Lone Star*, *The LEGO Movie*, and the exquisite Academy Award Best Picture *Moonlight*, a movie that can inspire endless empathy.)

Today there are policies to resist, people to protect, and practices to embody that will nurture us for these challenging tasks. It's popular to say "now, more than ever" to emphasize the current importance of the task of social healing. Because of the ease with which we can slip into dehumanizing talk, perhaps we need to turn our attention to beauty even more than opposition. To turn to beauty as *part* of our opposition.

One vital thing that any of us can do to help transform divisive aggression into passion for the common good is to ask strangers curiosity questions about their lives. We may all be invited to be Ann Darrow, or Belle, open to the hidden light behind a face that frightens us. ■

Gareth Higgins is an Irish writer and founder of moviesandmeaning.com and www.irelandretreats.com.

practice of holy resistance since long before the 2016 election. My bookshelves reject a narrow God who only loves those who have the correct set of beliefs. Instead of walls, these books are bridges that have carried me over swiftly moving currents of fear and hatred. They have set me free to love rather than to judge. Rereading some of the selections challenges me to unclench my fist and to offer these words up to others as reassurance

that God is the source of unconditional love. Although it started out as a reaction to the election, I am hopeful my personal resistance library will become a portal for connecting people of faith and engaging others in conversations. ■

Wendy Besel Hahn is a writer living in Reston, Va. She is currently working on a book about growing up non-Mormon in Utah.

Reviewed by David Ensign

WHEN THEOLOGY INTENSIFIES TRAUMA

Ruined, by Ruth Everhart. Tyndale House.

"IT HAPPENED ON a Sunday night, even though I'd been a good girl and gone to church that morning." From that opening, Ruth Everhart's *Ruined* begs the question: If the sovereign lord of the universe wills you to suffer unspeakable pain, what choice do you have?

Find your voice, and find a better God.

Ruined is a powerful memoir of suffering, survival, and theological imagination. In the age of Donald Trump, it is also subtle yet keen political critique. With unflinching and deeply personal honesty, Everhart takes the reader through the valley of deepest shadows with eyes wide open to the horror of a home invasion and sexual assault she and four Calvin College senior housemates survived in November 1978. The assault ruined more than the author's sense of what it meant to be a "good girl"; it also ruined her image of God.

Her strict Calvinist upbringing in the Christian Reformed Church taught that nothing happens outside of the sovereign will of God. Yet the assurances of the catechism came up short in the face of the horror and violence Everhart and her friends experienced.

In the aftermath, as days stretched to months, she was left struggling to understand how her rape could be part of God's will or if it was the punishment God brought upon her for the sin of being a fallen woman. When, against the odds, the rapists were eventually sentenced to lengthy prison terms, she was left wondering: If God was responsible for

that "justice," did that also mean that God was responsible for the crime in the first place?

Shaped in church and school by an ethic of sexual purity that measured a girl's worth according to her virginity, it's not difficult to understand how Everhart felt that God must be punishing her for a casual sexual encounter the summer before the break-in. One might expect that conclusion to spark a breakup with God altogether. Instead,

Everhart took the GRE and dreamed of applying to seminary, even though the Christian Reformed Church refused to ordain women.

One might also expect such trauma to result in challenging relationships, and it did. Everhart puts it like this: "And after that I felt rotten about myself, and I had an affair with a married man. He

was older, a seminarian, and I fell in love with him. I shouldn't have done it, but I did."

While the affair may not have been wise, its brief path and ultimate ending helped liberate Everhart from the theology of her childhood.

Theological liberation is not the same as theological reconstruction, and as a young woman starting over in her adopted hometown of Minneapolis, Everhart began the long search for a God worthy of her struggle and suffering. She found the map for that journey only a few steps removed from her Reformed Church heritage in a Presbyterian congregation in St. Paul. She knew she had come home when, on the first Sunday that she and her fiancé visited, the congregation was casting a vote to hire a woman as interim pastor.

From that community, Everhart ultimately lived into the calling she had first discerned as a young woman, and through its nurture, eventual seminary studies, and the unfolding journey of marriage and motherhood, Everhart came to understand the deep connection between love and suffering in the Incarnation.

Ruined, ultimately, expresses the deep wisdom of a survivor. From wisdom grows compelling conviction, which Everhart articulates in a coda addressed to her young adult daughters:

"Daughters, don't believe the lies! You are more than your virginity. You are more than your sexual history. You are more than what happens to you. You are immensely valuable. No wound can ever make you less than whole. Wounds become scars, and scars make a person beautiful. In fact, nothing is more washable than human skin. It is the most washable substance on earth. Thank God." ■

David Ensign is a writer, filmmaker, and part-time pastor at Clarendon Presbyterian Church in Arlington, Va.

Reviewed by Abigail Carroll

SPIRITUAL PRACTICES FOR REAL LIFE

The Year of Small Things: Radical Faith for the Rest of Us, by Sarah Arthur & Erin F. Wasinger. Brazos Press.

WHAT WOULD IT look like to extend radical hospitality to the "other," spend less money in order to give more away, reclaim the Sabbath by practicing intentional rest, embrace simplicity by downsizing material possessions, and seek the renewal of ailing cities and neighborhoods by living in them rather than fleeing them—all while holding jobs and raising a flock of kids?

In *The Year of Small Things*, Sarah Arthur and Erin Wasinger set out to discover the answer. Inspired by the New Monasticism, a movement that integrates ancient Christian values into modern life, the two friends and their families embark on a year of small but intentional steps of faith and action, devoting each month to a different theme, whether prayer, sustainability, or serving the needs of the under-resourced



city in which they live and worship.

What they find is that their project's biggest challenge—and its saving grace—is their choice to approach the year in committed community. They call it covenantal friendship. Each week, their families eat dinner together. They catch up on each other's

lives, and they ask hard but good questions. When Sarah and Tom commit to carving out a nightly prayer time before bed, Erin and Dave ask how it's going. When the couples share their grocery budgets, Sarah and Tom feel inspired

to cut costs by creatively using the food in their freezer before going out to buy more.

The dinners are messy in more ways than one: The hosting couple's house may not be perfectly picked up, the children's game of hide-and-seek may add an element of chaos, and the ad hoc menu may reflect what happens to line the pantry shelves. But the two families discover an unexpected holiness in the bustle and imperfection, and the simple tradition they embrace of ending the evening with a candle and a song speaks to the project at large—a year of small things.

Those unfamiliar with the New Monasticism will find in this book a helpful explanation of the movement's tenets and an honest, at times amusing, picture of what embracing those tenets can look like. With leading Christian thinkers such as Brian McLaren inviting us to consider Christianity not merely as a program of beliefs but as an invitation to live those beliefs in relationship, the Arthur and Wasinger families are doing the work of pioneers. They are reminding us of Christianity's roots in the beatitudes and the Sermon on the Mount, and they are calling us back to the faith of the early believers who inherently understood that small acts counted for much in the kingdom of God. Indeed, the two families learn that small acts are almost always more radical than they appear. ■

Abigail Carroll is author of A Gathering of Larks: Letters to Saint Francis from a Modern-Day Pilgrim (Eerdmans).

EXCERPT

BY JOAN CHITTISTER, OSB

RECONCILING TRADITION AND CHANGE

AFTER THE RELEASE of the documents of Vatican II, the great effort for change in the church erupted in a maze of emotional confusion. We struggled with the idea of change in the structures and presence of religious orders. We strained to balance the skewing of perceptions of change among the faithful as well as in the hearts of religious themselves. What would happen to the traditions that gave the spiritual life meaning? In fact, what would happen to tradition itself? Was the

past considered useless now? Lost? Simply being abandoned? And at what cost to us all?

The outburst of newness at every level of the faith—clerical, academic, lay, and religious—convulsed the system from top to bottom. What seemed theoretically desirable one day became the fault line of revolution the next. How much change could the need for change tolerate without bringing down the entire institution with it?

And all the while, the eighth step of humility, to do only those things “endorsed by the common rule of the monastery,” acted both as a barrier to change and as the only sensible companion through it.

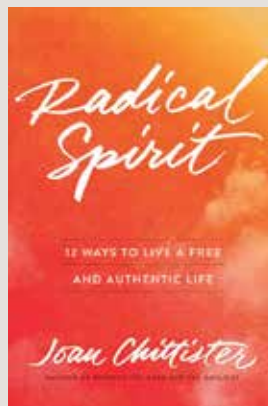
It was time to wrestle with the difference between tradition and traditionalism in a rapidly

changing world. It was a new question in institutions that took for granted that yesterday was a guide for tomorrow. The spiritual importance of the value of tradition was incontestable, of course. But the tendency to make traditionalism—the repetition of a thing simply because it has “always been done this way”—a worthy substitute for tradition was eating like a moth at the threads that made a spiritual life in the modern world possible.

It created a built-in tension: the most important one of all.

As Godfrey Diekmann, monk of St. John's Abbey in Minnesota, told his students, “Tradition is not the stuff we pass on; tradition is the passing on of the stuff.” Tradition lives and thrives on the energy and clarity of its vision and its dreams, its purpose and its goals. Traditionalism stands to smother the tradition under an avalanche of time-bound practices that served one generation well but have little spiritual nourishment or meaning to offer the next. ■

From Radical Spirit: 12 Ways to Live a Free and Authentic Life, by Joan Chittister, OSB; copyright 2017. Excerpted with permission from Convergent.



Reviewed by Anne Colamosca

A COMPLICATED REFORMER

Martin Luther: Renegade and Prophet, by Lyndal Roper. Random House.

Brand Luther, by Andrew Pettegree. Penguin Press.

Martin Luther: Visionary Reformer, by Scott H. Hendrix. Yale University Press.

ON OCT. 31, 1517, an intense 33-year-old Catholic monk with deep-set eyes and a prominent chin nailed an announcement of proposed points—95 theses—for a university discussion to the door of the Castle Church in Wittenberg, Germany. Martin Luther, a well-respected University of Wittenberg professor and administrator, was attacking the sale of indulgences by the Roman Catholic Church, in which the well-to-do “bought” their relatives out of purgatory by investing in “good works” for the church. Poorer people followed suit with a few coins.

Luther was far from the only critic of indulgences, but his action got attention. Intelligent and charismatic, he was not easily dismissed. He sparked the Protestant Reformation, marking its 500th anniversary this year, at that church door. This review touches on three Luther biographies: chiefly the new *Martin Luther: Renegade and Prophet*, by Lyndal Roper, the first woman named Regius Professor of History at Oxford University, but also *Brand Luther*, by Andrew Pettegree, and *Martin Luther: Visionary Reformer*, by Scott H. Hendrix.

Luther's fame grew after he refused to recant his criticisms of the Catholic Church at the 1521 Diet of Worms, in front of Charles V, the Holy Roman Emperor. Luther was declared a heretic and excommunicated. This incident, Roper writes, “probably did more to win people over to the Reformation and shape their hopes and expectations than did his theology.”

After leaving Worms, Luther was “kidnapped” by friendly forces and taken to Wartburg Castle, thwarting any immediate attempts by the church to harm him. In his 10 months there, Luther translated the New Testament into German. Then, back in Wittenberg, he and his colleague Lucas Cranach embarked on a wholesale revamping of the printing industry. The printing

press, invented less than a century earlier, had been used mainly for long, ponderous religious texts that few bought. Luther, with his vigorous, direct writing style and vernacular German translations, aimed an avalanche of books, hymnals, pamphlets, broadsheets, Bibles, and sermons at the general public. This went hand-in-hand with his idea that

the lay person did not need an intermediary to interpret the Bible.

Pettegree's original research into this formerly unexplored area of Luther's life is exhaustive and offers a new dimension to Luther studies.

Luther continued a wrenching theological

metamorphosis through his reading of scripture and analysis of Catholic Church practices. He questioned the pope's divine authority, the attribution of intercessory power to Mary and saints, the right of priests to grant forgiveness through the sacrament of confession, and the insistence that priests, monks, and nuns remain celibate.

Despite courting and receiving popular support from regular people, Luther was blindsided by the Peasant War, which broke out in autumn 1524. The peasant rebels invoked Luther's anti-clericalism as their reason for revolt; they desecrated and looted churches, attacked priests, and murdered nobles. Eventually the peasants were “put down.” Hendrix estimates that the conflict “claimed perhaps 80,000 lives, about twice the estimated number that died in the American Revolution.” Luther was apoplectic. He had never advocated violence. He declared the peasants to be “mad dogs” who did nothing “but pure devil's work,” and he sided with the princes, which has haunted his legacy through the centuries.

Luther's insistence that celibacy for monastics was not scriptural caused a veritable sexual rebellion in the 1520s. Nuns ran away from their convents, influenced by

Luther's view. As they arrived in Wittenberg with little money and no shelter, he became an impromptu marriage broker. One strong-willed, intelligent former nun named Katharina von Bora became his wife. Together they had six children, hosted many families, students, and theologians in Luther's former monastery, and by all accounts had a very successful marriage, despite ferocious attacks from detractors.

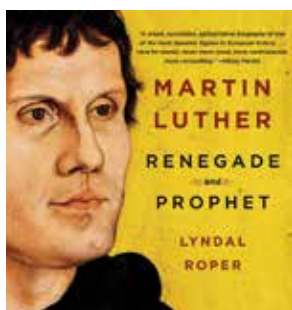
Luther was not “modern,” warns Roper, and “unless we appreciate his thought in its own, unfamiliar and often uncomfortable terms, we will not see what it might have to offer to us today.”

Lyndal Roper is a brilliant biographer and conduit for Luther, in the manner that biographer Robert Caro is for Lyndon Johnson, another larger-than-life man with profound successes and long periods of deep vindictiveness, cruelty, and score-settling. Roper drills deep into Luther's psyche, describing the “visceral” anti-Semitism that came to the forefront in the final years of his life. She points out, in a fascinating insight, that “despite his hatred, there were several aspects of Luther's theology that were akin to Judaism, and it is perhaps this proximity that triggered the violence of his assault: He had comparatively little to say about an afterlife; his religiosity put the importance of scripture and exegesis of the Hebrew and Greek texts center stage ... and his remarkably positive attitude toward the body placed him very close to the Jewish emphasis on fertility rather than virginity.”

These similarities perhaps gave Luther even more reason to fear for his life. The specter of being burned alive, disemboweled, tortured, or paraded through a city naked had been with him for close to 30 years. Many Protestants had suffered one or all of these fates. In his later life Luther was often miserable, and entangled in personal battles over the Reformation's direction.

Roper details Luther's many failings at length, but in the end, she generously sums up: “Luther's extraordinary openness, his honest willingness to put everything on the line, and his capacity to accept grace as a gift he did not merit, are his most attractive characteristics.” ■

Anne Colamosca is a former staff writer at Business Week and has written for many national magazines and newspapers.



The World Begins Anew

REMEMBER THAT *you are dust, and to dust you shall return.* The prayer said around the world on Ash Wednesday wielded a rather pointed moral to the tail end of the hottest February on record where I live. Penitents in my neighborhood church shuffled in a sun-kissed line to receive ashes on tanned foreheads, summer sandals slapping the floor. Outside, overeager daffodils bloomed their Easter welcome. A strange one, this backward Lent: balmy with a side of dread.

This existential reversal felt nothing if not timely—all through the winter, a collective litany of weary newsfeeds asked whether we really needed quite so much of it. The first months of this year have witnessed a steady erosion of trust in whatever institutions we had left: the federal government, the electoral process, our checks and balances, our freedoms, our faith, each other. Some trace our hard skid sideways to the election, or the Super Bowl, or the Oscars. (I peg it to the Cubs' win in November. I grew up in Chicagoland—I know reversing a curse has consequences.)

But there's something particularly dizzying about the separation of church and earth. The globe is getting



proportions — a truly existential crisis,” writes Gillian Caldwell at *Grist*.

Liturgical seasons are tied to the natural seasons—celebrations of the rhythms of land and body as extended metaphor for our communal spiritual life. Church seasons rely on the poetry of predictable cycles: For each repentance in chill, drizzly early spring, there is resurrection in the burst of late spring flowers; for every dark frost of Advent, God returns at Christmas like the light marking the end of deepest winter.

To see blooms adorning a church on Ash Wednesday—instead of at Easter, when Love comes again like lilies, like “wheat that springeth green”—scrambles the spiritual metaphor. And, to some extent, our rhythms of identity. The Western church is intimately tied to the earth. The Liturgy of Hours was a daily observance with the sun before it came to be tied to mechanized time, and every sacrament, from communion to baptism, is linked to understanding

earth's unfolding at the proper time.

Christians in every wrinkle of the world have spiritual metaphors tied to their own seasons—it's worth noting that for millions of Christians, Christmas has never involved bitter cold. But “weather weirding” as we're witnessing is a full-scale disruption. And this collective ecological trauma must, in some ways, have spiritual tremors. “Its effects are insidiously eroding—intrusive, disruptive—not just to the one, but to the whole,” Naisa Wong wrote for *Sojourners* online of ecological trauma's wear

Shutterstock

on institutions. “Where safety and sustenance were inherent functions ... each passing year renders [us] less dependable, less able to provide.”

On what can the church lean, and lead, in this dislocated season, if our deepest narrative roots can't find ground? A new ethic of leading through flux will be needed, as will, perhaps, new stories of the seasons. The reign of God in the violets *and* in the frost that suddenly covers them. And while the priests and storytellers among us develop new liturgies, there are the words of Jan Richardson: “Nothing ... cries out more for a blessing than when a world is falling apart. ... This blessing will simply sit itself beside you ... and gently turn your face toward the direction from which the light will come, gathering itself about you as the world begins again.” ■

Catherine Woodiwiss is Sojourners' senior associate web editor.



A strange one, this backward Lent: balmy with a side of dread.

hotter every year now, but the effects of this ecological trauma, like any grief, are far from linear. If warming simply meant the usual weather, shifted a month early or late, we could figure out how to recalibrate—but our snowfall is breaking records *and* our ice caps are melting. A winter afternoon can begin as warm as an early summer day and suddenly drop 25 degrees to freezing rain.

“We know we are facing a looming catastrophe of unparalleled

What Are We Baptized For?

THE WEEKS AFTER EASTER have always been especially important. Think of the first Easter—the bewildered disciples spent seven weeks being taught by a crucified and resurrected person. It must have been amazing, slightly unbelievable, then gone too soon. In the ancient church, Easter was a time for the newly baptized to immerse in the church's odd and distinctive teachings. We dunked you—and then told you what that means. First Peter was originally a baptismal manual, a guidebook on the way to being the sort of peculiar people God wants (1 Peter 2:9). We do well during this month to look for extra opportunities for teaching. What does it mean to be baptized into a dead-and-alive-again person?

One thing it means in our own strange days is to craft creative ways to care for God's beloved poor. We are experiencing a shredding of our country's social safety net. Say whatever you like about it politically—the reality is there are more poor in more need. Someone is going to have to help. Why not us? It's commanded in our Bible and our church's heritage. There will be more of them, trust me. Our neighbors will notice and get curious

about this Jesus about whom we teach. God desires a people of mercy who adore the poor, who treasure creation, who notice the dignity in every single human face. Not because it's nice. But because God has a human face.



Jason Byassee holds the Butler chair in homiletics and biblical hermeneutics at Vancouver School of Theology in British Columbia.

Against an ocean of fear, God gives the revolutionary word, "Fear not."

[MAY 7]

Scared Sheep?

Acts 2:42-47; Psalm 23; 1 Peter 2:19-25; John 10:1-10

IMAGINE THE SORT of fervor necessary to make the church behave like in Acts 2. Many things there we still do—we gather, we break open bread and scripture, we teach and pray. But today, we have limits. Standards. So we don't sell our possessions and distribute the proceeds to the needy (2:45). I mean, you have to be responsible, right?

Notice some other things we don't do. We're not in awe, drunk with wonder (2:43). We don't amaze our neighbors (2:47). And, I'd wager, we don't see the Lord "day by day" adding to our number those being saved.

Nadia Bolz-Weber calls this the early church's "10-minute hippie phase." But like a commune grown middle aged, the church has now moved out to the suburbs, started a pension, and begun to worry about the wrong people moving in.

It's also "sheep Sunday," apparently. These texts are ground zero for those who feel Christianity's agrarian metaphors are outdated. Those people have not seen what I have: Any heart will thrill to recite Psalm

23 in the face of death, however religious they think they aren't. Think of the degree of fear rife in our culture. It's the sort of fear that drives Britons to Brexit, Koreans to elect the daughter of a dictator, Americans to ... well. Over against that ocean of fear, the biblical God gives the revolutionary word, "Fear not." Because we have a powerful shepherd. Sure, we pass through the presence of enemies (Psalm 23:4). But the shepherd is so calm that he does more than hurry past danger. He lingers, prepares a fine table in its midst, invites us to dine (23:5).

Jesus has a way of mixing his metaphors—he's the shepherd. No, he's the gatekeeper. Actually, he's the gate. He's just so full of life, the metaphors come cascading out all cross-wise. However, this description is clear: He is abundant life (10:10), overflowing, running off to others. Not fear, not blame, just nothing but life life life.

Maybe, if we believe that, Acts 2 would not be so unattainable after all.

[MAY 14]

Dwell in the Word

Acts 7:55-60; Psalm 31:1-5, 15-16; 1 Peter 2:2-10; John 14:1-14

BIBLICAL SCHOLAR Ellen Davis speaks of the Bible as a friend. Losing a substantial portion of the Bible—like, say, the jettisoning of the Old Testament by many Christians—lessens us, like the death of a friend. But the Bible is a difficult friend. Read all of Acts 7: Stephen spews vitriol on his interlocutors until you're ready to pick up a rock yourself. And many Christians abhor John 14 as narrow and demeaning of others.

What would it mean to befriend texts as difficult as these?

Friendship goes two ways. These texts work on us, even as we lodge complaints with them. Stephen is the first martyr. All those whose testimonies are written in their own blood look to him for inspiration. He is also a deacon, a servant, one set aside to care for God's beloved poor. To work for the marginalized is not noblesse oblige. It is a sort of death to one's self. Stephen dies forgiving his murderers and gives us a model for when we see anyone else's sin: Pray that God would overlook it (7:60). And Luke just can't help himself—he sets readers up for Saul's transformation from murderer to missionary and scripture-writer and martyr (7:58).

Have another glance at John 14. There's a reason we read this text for comfort at gravesides. King James unfortunately translated 14:2 as "mansions," promising believers the sort of real estate Jesus quite eschewed. But as ever there is more going on in John than we think. Jesus promises here a "dwelling place" (much more modest). And elsewhere he says he dwells with the One who sent him. He promises to dwell with us. The life of the Trinity is a mutual indwelling, the church has said, and so the life of the church, at a vast remove, imitates this intertangling of life, of love that God is. John 14:6 quoted with venom is us at our worst. But cited in this context it promises life indistinguishable from homeless, inclusive, logic-twisting Jesus, whose life is life itself.

Difficult as these texts may be, they are good friends: They make us more than we could be on our own.

[MAY 21]

Scrambled Heads

Acts 17:22-31; Psalm 66:8-20;
1 Peter 3:13-22; John 14:15-21

HOW OFTEN DO we stop and reflect on the sheer oddity of what we believe? That the king of Israel, not recognized by his own people, died, rose from the grave, reigns over all, and wants to transform the world through as unlikely a people as us?

Take these passages for today: Paul has a chance to address the whole world from a hill in Athens. He flatters them first. Uses some of their own religious and philosophical heritage to build commonality. Tells them that God is no physical object, but since God made us all, God is like us. They're nodding along. And then he drops this: Repent. God will judge. Ignorance is no longer acceptable. Because God raised Jesus from the dead.

It didn't work. Few listened or responded. Maybe that resurrection bit was a bridge too far.

Try 1 Peter: It has wise words on suffering for doing good. Most religions would nod in appreciation. But then Peter goes on to detail Jesus' postmortem preaching career. Apparently, he preached up a revival in Hades (3:19-20). The church speaks of him "harrowing" hell. He plowed the place up. Now whoever is there is there by choice. The gate is permanently open, the lock broken. There are no depths God will not go to save.

Run that by me one more time?!

And then, oddest of all, Jesus: He's leaving. But he's staying. And he's coming back. He's sending another. Who's also himself. And sent by God. Because I live, you live. You are in me and I am in you and we are in God. Does this guy understand basic grammar, chronology, personhood? Or is he scrambling these and all things around?

Maybe if our hearers don't emerge dumbfounded, stupefied, then we're not doing it right. I know how much we gather up each "Good sermon today!" like fine jewels, the withholding of which is a sort of deprivation of a basic human right for us preachers. But the next time they come out blinkered like their eyes have never seen light like this, give thanks. Maybe God has had God's way with them finally.

[MAY 28]

To All the World

Acts 1:6-14; Psalm 68:1-10, 32-35;
1 Peter 4:12-14, 5:6-11; John 17:1-11

ASCENSION DAY was Thursday, May 25. I bet you didn't notice. It used to be one of the great festivals of the church. Now it's a point of trivia. It's the day when Jesus returns to the right hand of God. He is exalted in victory. "Let God rise up," the psalmist announces. "Let God's enemies be scattered" (Psalm 68:1). It's a little hard to render artistically—feet up above us, disciples perplexed, a body floating on the clouds. But the Ascension solves a problem. Where is the body of this man bodily raised from the grave? And it makes a promise. Jesus will come like that—as weirdly and as physically as he left (Acts 1:11).

In the meantime, there is work to do, detailed in one of the most pulse-racing passages of scripture we have (1:8). The gospel has to go to all the world: Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria, and the ends of the earth. That is, as endless sermons have explored, your home (Jerusalem), your nearest relations and friends (Judea), your enemies

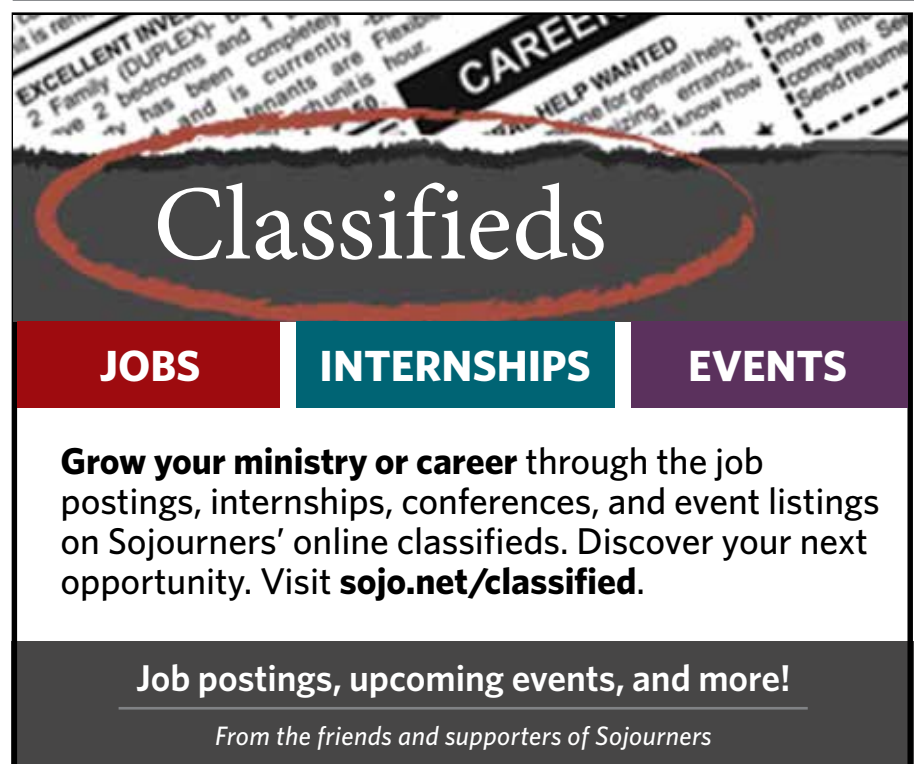
(Samaria), and everybody else.

Wow. Outstanding. Amazing. And so the disciples ... pray. That's it. They don't gear up, study other languages, prepare to take over the world in God's name. They gather in a dining room and pray. They might as well have played Tetris and Pokemon Go. Here they've been charged to remake the world God's way and they rush out and ... do nothing. Which is what prayer is—an inactivity in God's presence.

Stranger still, Jesus prays. Jesus who is God's own self over again spends countless hours not healing, not teaching, not making the world a better place, but talking to God (to himself?!). God thinks prayer so important that God gives us a whole biblical book—the longest book—that is nothing but prayers (the Psalms).

Lord knows our world needs activists who will not rest until it is repaired. We live in a time of the new barbarians, punishing the poor and scapegoating the stranger. God weeps. Let's get busy. But first, let's pray. And not just at first. ■

"Preaching the Word," Sojourners' online resource for sermon preparation and Bible study, is available at sojo.net/ptw.



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From the friends and supporters of Sojourners

The True Cost of Peace

I'M STARTING TO think I'm never going to see that money. For years I have demonstrated for peace and justice, sometimes playing my guitar, sometimes not (by request), and I've yet to get paid for it.

I never thought I would, of course, having decided long ago that a strong public witness was an end unto itself: expressing solidarity for the oppressed, calling for political change, seeing myself on TV.

But lately right-wing media have claimed that millions of people marching for justice are doing it for the money, a possibility that, frankly, has a certain appeal.

The latest such accusation was in response to the outpouring of support for unjustly detained immigrants. Fox News' Sean Hannity tweeted, "Who is bankrolling the protests taking place at airports across the country?" A serious ques-



Ken Davis

with accusatory messages, but they all blew away). Adjusting for inflation, I calculate my participation should be worth about 75 bucks per protest.

I can deduct \$10 for the vigils where I played guitar at the front of the march—those were fun—although I'll charge extra for the march when I turned left at the White House and everybody else turned right, and I didn't realize it until a tourist asked me why I kept singing "The Spirit of the Lord is upon us" when it was just me.

And I'll expect an extra \$25 for the time my shirt tore when I was shoved roughly into a police van. The shirt was made of madras, a light cotton material that I thought was perfect for summer justice activities. But it didn't hold up to zealous police officers. Plus, tear gas makes the colors run. So now I recommend unbleached muslin as the best outerwear for today's busy activist. (Gandhi might not have looked his best in this fabric, let's be honest, but it holds a good pleat.)

Throw in another \$60 for the shoes I ruined stepping into an icy puddle during a candlelight vigil (why is it we never hold flashlight vigils?)—and I figure I'm owed about \$3,400 total. And that's just for me. Thousands of other people marched, too, sometimes behind me, sometimes not.

So pay up, whomever. I could use the money for new guitar strings, which I haven't changed since the days of Ronald Reagan, when our constant public witness finally ousted him from the White House after eight years. (Never thought I'd miss the guy.) ■

Ed Spivey Jr. is art director of Sojourners.

Fine. Uhm ... Sean Hannity looks nothing like Beyoncé.

(Perfect.)

HANNITY IS JUST one of many conservative commentators who accuse activists of being bankrolled by wealthy elitists who, coincidentally, are all named George Soros. I won't bring up the fact that billionaires on the right have donated much more money, particularly the Koch brothers, Larry, Curly, and ... (STOP!)

But, for the moment, let's just say Hannity is correct, which is why I keep watching the mail for checks.

Throughout our history, Sojourners has been at the forefront of public witness for justice in the nation's capital. We've led dozens of demonstrations, and will be involved in many more, and I'd be happy to itemize them for payment.

Assuming the minimum wage at the time, adding in expenses such as bus fare to the rally and supplies, including poles for our banners (you have to get the angle right when boarding, otherwise you knock off the bus driver's hat, which makes him less sympathetic to the cause), and art board for our large signs (initially we used Post-Its

**I've been marching for decades.
Now it's time to get paid.**

tion, but not from somebody who looks exactly like Lou Costello.

(Editor's Note: No one knows who that is. We're trying to reach millennial readers here, and young people have never heard of a comedian from the 1940s. Please try to be more current with your cultural references.)

Point taken. On second thought, Sean Hannity looks more like Moe from The Three Stooges, you know, the angry one who was always poking ...

(No one gets that, either.)

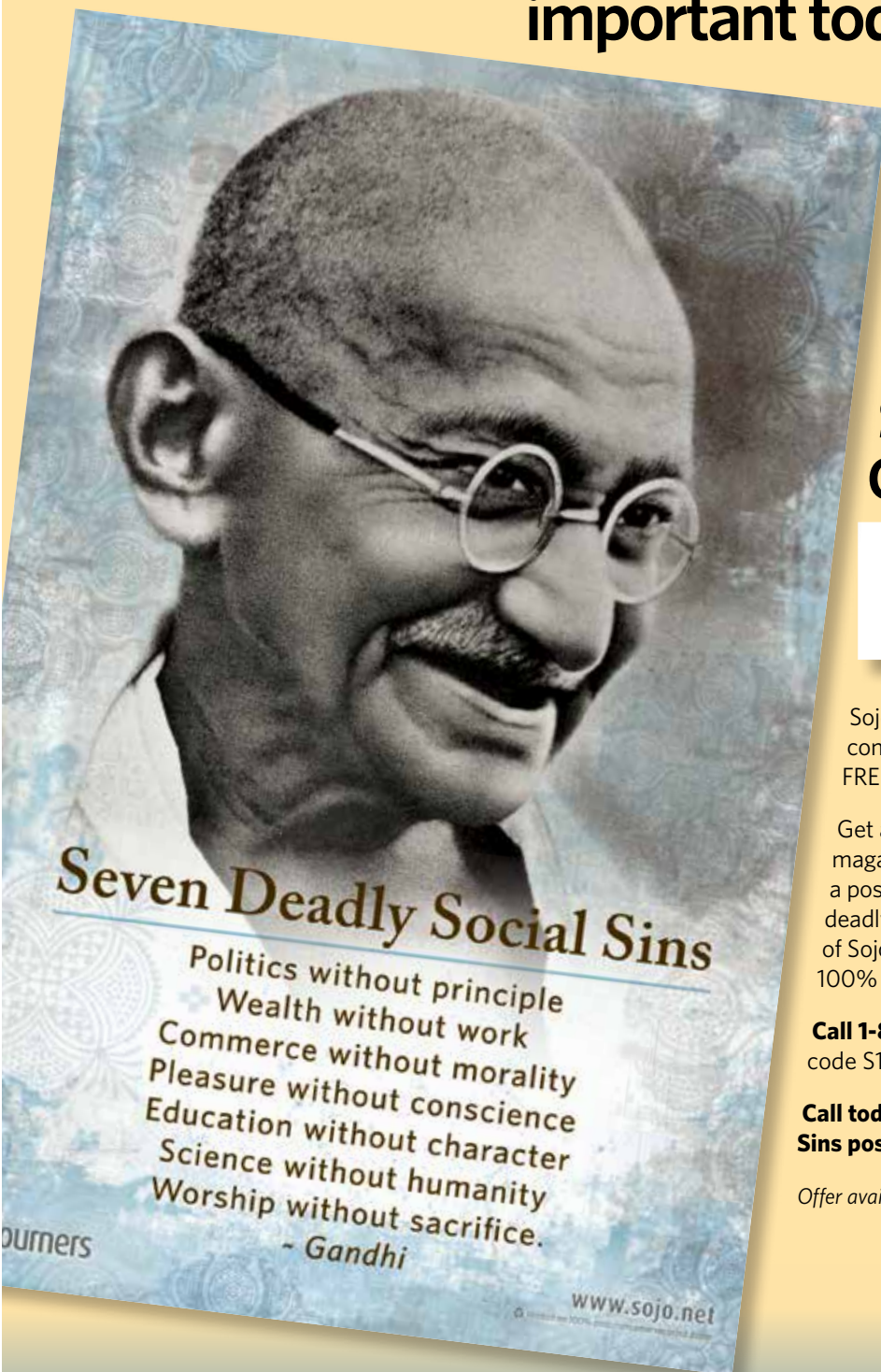
Regardless, in these troubled times, when the Beach Boys sing "Good Vibrations," one hears the universal ...

(Nope.)

Gilligan says ... (PLEASE!)

OMG andhi!

His words are even more
important today.



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